

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLEPAUL A PRISONER—THE SHIP-
WRECK.*

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, D.D.

When it was day, v. 39. Surely no dawn was ever brighter to that storm-tossed company than that which rose after many gloomy, sunless days, on the shores of Melita. Like the blessed sunlight, flooding land and sea, the joy of a great deliverance would fill their hearts to overflowing. It is a far more wonderful deliverance that sets us free from sin. The day on which we first see that Jesus is our great and sufficient Saviour will ever shine for us with a brightness that can belong to no other. On that day a new joy will come into our hearts, of which no power can ever rob us, and which will grow deeper and sweeter with the passing years.

The centurion, willing to save Paul, v. 43. It was by no miracle that Paul had won his way to the confidence and affection of this Roman officer. The sawed soldier, skilled in dealing with men, had observed the apostle's straightforward sincerity and helpfulness and courage, and these had won his admiration and respect. So Joseph, in Potiphar's house and in the prison and in Pharaoh's palace, and David at the court of Saul, and Daniel in Babylon, by doing, with all their might, the duty laid upon them, found favor with those whom they served. And it is just in the same old-fashioned way that young people are to do in the world to-day—by doing so well what they have to do, that they are seen to be worthy of trust and advancement. Many a merchant has had to keep high-salaried positions vacant for months because he has not been able to find the right man to fill them. It is very sure, if we fit ourselves for some useful position, that the right place will sooner or later find us.

All safe, v. 44. Why should not that, at last, be the blessed case of all gospel hearers—safe forever in the heavenly home? The gospel offer could not be more full and free, "Whosoever believeth" may have "eternal life." "Whosoever will" may drink of the living water. But alas, of some in all ages, the words of Jesus to the Jews are true. "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life." It is never God's hand that snats the door of safety in the face of any. He is ever willing to save. If we come to Him with a like willingness, we shall surely rejoice in His salvation. Oh, the pity of it, if, when He, in His wonderful love, has opened the door so wide, any of us, in blind folly, should shut that door against Himself! Paul gathered a bundle of sticks, ch 28: 3. Greatness is measured by service. This idea is crystallized, for example, in the noble motto borne by the Prince of Wales, "Ich dien," "I serve," and the title of Prime Minister, which means "Chief Servant," given to the leader of the Government in Britain and her daughter nations. The nobles' ambition is not to be able to get as many people as possible to do as many things as possible for us, but to do as much as we can for as many as we can. It may be only very humble service, but so long as it is done out of loyalty to Jesus and love to our fellow men, it will not be forgotten. The glorious Leader whom we follow will never let the least honest effort or the smallest real sacrifice go unnoticed or unrewarded.

Prayed, healed, v. 8. Yonder in the mighty cataract of Niagara is an exhaustless store of energy. Here are cities and towns with machinery to be driven, homes and streets to be lighted—all sorts of work to be done. The link between that supply of power and this need is the electrical machinery

and the transmission wires. With these in place and doing their part, that resistless power is harnessed for the service of man. The Christian is the living link between the power of God and the need of the world. When he lays hold of God by prayer, the full energy of the divine nature flows out: in blessing for the bodies and for the souls of men. Little as we have in ourselves for the helping and uplifting of those about us, we can bring to them strength that will never fail, might sufficient for any conquest, when we have learned the secret of effectual prayer.

COMING INTO THE CHRISTIAN
LIFE.

In studying different types of experience, the various temperaments of people must be taken into the account as well as their training and habits; for all these play important parts in determining what they will do and how they will proceed in seeking God, and coming into the Christian life, as well as in advancing to the higher states of grace. "Many men of many minds," and men of extremely different environments, are to be met and rescued and transformed—cleansed and built up in the likeness of God. The gospel, if divine, must have provisions and be sufficiently flexible to meet every condition, and to fit the peculiarities and idiosyncrasies of every individual. It is therefore unwise to expect that all will receive the grace of God in the same way, while there is great folly in supposing that by any possible constraint every one can be brought to measure up to one given type of Christian experience, either in its earlier or later stages. Diversity marks the work of God from incipency to consummation.

Let it not be forgotten, as remarked heretofore, that the foundation principles of redemption and the essential terms of salvation are always the same; but that in the revelations of saving power in the soul, and in all the steps of progress following the induction into Christ, there are innumerable varieties, giving to each man an experience personal and unlike. From all this the fact is readily deducible that it is improper to measure any man's experience a standard or a model for the experience of other people. There is no model experience, Christ is the model man. His active life as a man was perfect, and to be imitated; but he never experienced the cleansing or washing from sin which our sanctification implies. He was not regenerated or sanctified, as sinners must be; and therefore he never illustrated in anything he did or suffered the process of passing from sin to holiness. He declared and lived up to the standard of moral purity necessary for our complete union with himself, and made the way possible, so that every one, each with his personal characteristics and his individual environments, may come up to the full measure of duty and privilege without in the least ceasing to be himself. The quiet man of phlegmatic temperament can reach the high standard, and continue quiet; while the man of impulsive nature will rise, perhaps more rapidly, to the same standard, but with almost superhuman emotions and marvelous demonstrations.—From "Sanctification."

God is ever blotting out sins from His remembrance—never tiring. Oh! I will tell you what it is like. It is like the infinite, tireless patience of the sea. The children heap the sand up, they dig deep into it . . . And then quietly the old sea turns upon its course, and rolls its waves across the sands, and every trace of scar is obliterated, becomes as if it had never been.—C. Silvester Horne.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. James Ross, D.D.

Anchor.—In the heroic age of Greece anchors of iron were unknown. Large stones, called sleepers, were used instead, and even later, bags of sand and baskets of stones were used in cases of necessity. We know from pictures of anchors on coins of the time of Paul, that they were of iron, and very similar in shape to those used to-day. The figures of ships show the hole in the prow through which the cable attached to the anchor passed. When vessels were at rest near the land, the anchor was cast into the deep water and the ship turned with her stern toward the shore. When she was driving before the wind and was in danger of running ashore, anchors were cast from the stern. Sometimes, when the ship was drifting, the anchor was placed in a boat and rowed out to the full length of the cable before being dropped to check the ship with. In a shorter distance. The largest and strongest anchor was called sacred, and was reserved for a crisis. To cast the sacred anchor was an expression used of persons employing a last resort.

DUTY DOING BETTER THAN
RESOLUTIONS.

Good resolutions are never a short cut to good works. Carefully thought out plans and earnestly made resolves are valuable only as they bring into plain sight the duties that we ought to be doing. They are worse than useless when we let them take the place of duty-doing, as we so often do. A man will, on his way from his house to his office at the beginning of the day, make such good plans and resolves for that day that by the time he reaches his office he has unconsciously let himself think that the hardest part of the work is already done; and then the real doing of it evaporates in the glow of the plan-making. It is better for most people to spend more of their time on what needs to be done than on planning when and how they will do it. An unplanned duty done is better than a duty that always remains planned for.—S. S. Times.

ABOUT LOVE.

Love is the fulfilling of the law. The law is a transcript of the character of God. God is love. The proof of love is obedience. The foundation of a godly life is love. Where love abounds, strifes, ugly disputings, are impossible. Let us feel this is a fact. We fear many do not. When love is sited abroad in the heart of a church, friction, discord, evil antagonisms, disappear. Let no one think that the presence of love shuts off the sturdy advocacy of measures. One may hold to his views tenaciously and yet do it lovingly. Let us cultivate love in our hearts. Presbyterian Standard.

As the shade of a cool cedar

To a traveler in gray Kedar.

Will be the kingdom of his love, the kingdom without end.

Tongues and ages may disclaim him, Yet the heaven of heavens will name him.

Lord of peoples, Light of nations, Elder Brother, tender Friend.

Cumberland Presbyterian: There are times in life when the wheels of the chariot drag in the mire, when the grasshopper becomes a burden, when the harps hang on the willows, and when the leaden hue pervades the sky. But let the Christian not lose heart. He is not orphaned, even if God seems for a time to withdraw his face. God grants seasons of clear shining to cheer the soul after rain.

* S.S. Lesson, November 7, 1909.—Acts 27: 39 to 28: 10. Commit to memory vs. 9, 10. Study Acts 27: 27 to 28: 10. Golden Text.—The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate. Psalm 34: 22.