

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLEJESUS' POWER OVER DISEASE
AND DEATH*

Servant, dear, v. 2. Every one with whom we have anything to do should be dear unto us. This servant was a slave, a mere chattel, whom the laws and customs of that age regarded as outside the pale of human sympathy. Yet this Roman gentleman loved him. To the follower of Christ, everybody is one for whom Christ died. The teacher, the playmate, the next-door neighbor, the postman, the pedlar, the newsboy, take on a new interest and compel a new kindness, when we remember that.

Worthy, v. 4. —Authority should beget sympathy. He ruled over these Jews, and instead of using his soldiers to fleece or to flout them, he had won their affection. Too often authority goes the other road, gets proud, and delights in showing its power to awe or daze people, rather than using it to serve them. If men had omnipotent power, Shakespeare says

"Every petty, pelting officer
Would use God's heaven for thunder,
Nothing but thunder."

What a pleasant place the world would be, if every clerk in an office or store were obliging, if every errand boy and messenger were polite, if every elder brother and sister felt that their extra years licensed them to be patient and gentle?

Not worthy, v. 6. The man who is most worthy is most apt to think himself least worthy. And he is not the prey of delusion. The fact is, the more anybody knows of anything, the more he knows that he does not know. The larger the boundary of his knowledge, the more yet to be learned is discernible. And it is just the same with morals. The more good a man does, the more good he sees which he has not done. This is why flagrant sinners, men of sordid or callous or violent natures, see no need of confessing sin. They have no notion of holiness, and so cannot see that they lack it. On the other hand, the gentle and pure and holy, who are too good for this world, earnestly pray for forgiveness of their sins. It is always the most pious who see the greatest reason for penitence.

Say the word (Rev. Ver.), v. 7. The test of faith is to find it as practical as sight. When we obey the laws of the spiritual world with as great a confidence of results, as we obey the laws of the material world, we have made good progress in faith. This centurion had said the word, and been obeyed. He believes that Jesus can do the same in the realm of miraculous healing. An inventor once brought a corset of woven steel to an officer, claiming that it would stop any bullet. "Put it on!" said the officer, "Sentry," said the officer, "Ready! Present!"—but the inventor had fled. His faith could not stand the experimental test. When we consider God's providence as real as the grocer's shop, and His protection as secure as a Yale lock, we do well. We really believe the divine promises when we venture our all upon them.

Set under authority, v. 8. Authority will beget humility or pride, just as you choose to take it. It is under or over, commanding or commanded, receiving orders or giving them, a matter of responsibility, or a matter of vain glory. Wellington had something else to do the night before Waterloo than swagger in his brilliant uniform. And on the night after the battle was won, instead of being intoxicated with success, he rode among the heaps of the slain and wept. President Lincoln was once treated with disdain by a general of the army. He said, "I will

hold General M—'s horse, if he will only win some battles." How noble and humble was the wise President, compared with the silly officer, whom he was soon forced to dismiss for incompetence!

Only son of his mother, a widow, v. 12. This is the sort of person Jesus meets in the way. Because she was twice forlorn, bereft of both husband and child, He brings His help. This is because He is a Deliverer. Who ever heard of the wrecking gang being ordered out on the railway when there had been no accident? When was a lifeboat launched to carry a lunch to a merry party picnicking on a glassy sea? Who lights a lamp in the daytime, or keeps the furnace in his cellar burning in summer? He came to save the lost, to give rest to the weary, to heal the blind, to bind up the broken hearts, to bring sinners to repentance. As surely as the magnetic needle turns to the pole, did His heart and hand turn to the relief of human distress.

Wept not, v. 13. When Garibaldi was fighting for the freedom of Italy, the patriots of every village he passed through hailed him with cheers. At that time the victory had not been won, nor the blessings of independence and peace attained. On the contrary, the land was in the agony and desolation of war, its industries paralyzed, and human blood flowing like water. Yet they cheered him,—and not for what he had done, but for what he was doing. Just so, there is always reason for joy when Christ is present. He is the champion of happiness, who is victoriously destroying the forces of pain and sin. He will yet wipe every tear away, and abolish even death.

Arise, v. 14.—A child can awaken a sleeping person. A doctor can set a sick man on his feet. But who can call back the dead to life again? Jesus did; and did even a more wonderful feat. He rose Himself from the dead. Said a visitor to a little girl who was dying, "Are you trusting in the death of Christ?" "Yes," she whispered, "but it is His resurrection I am thinking most about." Is it not a marvellous juxtaposition.

"That Calvary day and Easter day,
Earth's saddest day and gladdest day,
Are just one day apart?"

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. Jas. Ross, D.D.

Nain—Is no doubt the modern Nain, a collection of poor clay hovels inhabited by fanatical Moslems, on the northwest corner of Little Hermon, between Endor and Shunem, at the east end of the plain of Esdraelon. Many heaps of stone and rubbish around it indicate that it was once a place of some importance. There are no traces of city walls; perhaps all that is meant by "gate" is the entrance among the houses by the ordinary path. There is a little mosque in the centre of the village called, "The Place of Our Lord Jesus Christ," and on the other side of the steep path leading up to it are many rock tombs.

Carried Out—There, burial, still follows death in a few hours. The body is washed and mourned over by the family and others, the schoolmaster reads some sections of the Koran over it, and it is then wrapped in a white or green sheet and carried to the grave. Six poor blind men walk ahead, two by two, chanting the creed, then the body borne by four friends who are frequently relieved, then follow the female relatives, with disheveled hair. In the mosque, prayers are said over the body, and it is then buried with the face towards Mecca.

Our word resurrection seems to concentrate the history of the universe to whisper the secret of the life of God.

THE HIGHER THANKSGIVING.

Around the world of human life stretches the endless chain of the brotherhood of man, irrespective of race or creed, and each link of that chain is cemented by individual love. Here and there, alas, a link is found almost worn through by the rust of selfish neglect, but nevertheless, the chain is there binding us all in one large family, and drawing us under the care of one loving, supreme and eternal Father. Life can hold no greater aim than to recognize the fact of the existence of this brotherhood, and to learn its first sweet lesson—the joy of loving our brother better than ourselves.

To give to him of our substance because we love him will bring to us a happiness that arises from selfishness only. As has been said, love has so many degrees that we do not always recognize it when we are face to face with it; but in kindness and sympathy it is most commonly expressed, and it is no more than just to expect that if we have received kindness we should pass it on, thus making, within the endless chain of brotherhood, the endless chain of protection, gratitude and trust. A great fault in the human kingdom today is that we do not love enough; in fact, if honestly considered, we will find that but few of us even know how to love at all. There are a good many false representations of this Divine gift, but there are but few truthful evidences of its existence to be found in the daily walks of life.

When we feel that we possess this gift, we have but to ask ourselves, "Is this that I feel for my brother the love that pleases not itself?" and in the answer we shall receive we shall be able to place it where it belongs in the scale of life.

To establish the habit of looking beneath the form to find the life has done more to elevate mankind than almost anything else, for it brings to light the real meaning underlying the symbols, ceremonies, rites and habits existing throughout the whole world. When this has become an established practice, there will be fewer misunderstandings, less bitter strife, greater tolerance, more universal love and a truer conception of all that may be found in the song of a higher thanksgiving.—Christian at Work.

Oh, ring and swing, sweet Easter bells, in
all your towers high!
Outpour your music to the earth, uplift it
to the sky;
Send out its sound, the wide world round,
till near or far away
The answering echoes sweet rebound, the
Lord is risen to-day!
Break forth again in singing all ye little
hills of God!
The pulsing of your music fills the flowers
beneath the sod;
Upspringing into verdant life, they rise
from earth's dark prison;
How could they sleep in silence deep, when
Christ, the Lord is risen!

NO ANSWER TO CHARACTER.

How great a power is character! Out of God's own person and his truth, there is no other so mighty and persuasive. It is that eloquence which man least knows how to resist. It provokes no resistance. Being itself only truth in life, it suffers no answer. If the beholder turns away to escape the homage he feels, its image still goes with him, to reprove his evil deeds and call him every hour to God.—Horace Bushnell.

It is better that the door be closed to guests than that the emphasis of hospitality be placed on the wine cup.

*S. S. Lesson, April 15, 1906.—Luke 7: 1-17. Commit to memory vs. 14, 15. Read Matthew 8:1, 5-13. Golden Text—Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life.—John 11:25.