

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

A DAY OF MIRACLES IN CAPERNAUM.*

By Rev. J. W. McMillan, M.A.

He entered into the synagogue, and taught, v. 21. Jesus went to church, and took part in the service. He did not say to the disciples, "I am away from home to-day, and will treat myself to a holiday." Neither did He say, "Those Pharisees and scribes who run that synagogue are a lot of hypocrites; I won't go near their service." It is wonderful how much less excuse will keep some people from church than from other meetings. They do not stay away from political meetings because the seats are hard, or from a concert because there is a draught. They do not refuse to attend a baseball match because someone they dislike plays on the team. A shower of rain does not keep the merchant from his store, or the carpenter from his bench. Why should it be easier to give excuses to God than to men?

Astonished at his teaching (Rev. Ver.), v. 22. There is nothing so impressive as the truth. It was because He told the truth straight from God, that the people listened to Him. Spenser in his "Faerie Queen" tells of the fair maid Una who was attended by a lion. Una is the church, and her lion is the truth, full of courage and force. No lie can face him for a single moment. The church, or the person who, by word or life, witnesses sincerely to God's truth, will work harm to all falsehood and wrong. Everybody hates a liar, and will have little mercy upon him. Whereas, everybody will be impressed by the courage of one who tells the truth, even though unpleasant. And God, far more than men, loves sincerity and frankness.

A man with an unclean spirit, v. 23. "My place," said a minister recently placed over a congregation, "is with the sick and sorrowing. There you may expect to find me while I am minister." The words were spoken in the spirit of Christ. For, as the sun finds its way into the darkest corners, He sought out in the crowd that one who most needed His help. If we have any special burden or trouble, we may be sure that the Saviour is looking for us, eager to lighten our load and comfort our hearts. The door into His presence stands wide open for the poor, the ignorant and the weak. They, above all others, are sure of a welcome.

Let us alone, v. 24. When Jacob Riis was taking photographs in New York for his book, "How the Other Half Lives," wishing to secure pictures of actual criminal life, he sometimes turned his camera on a company who were gambling in supposed security. Imagine their surprise and anger when the blinding flash of the magnesium suddenly burst upon them, and they knew that they had not only been discovered, but photographed in the very act of their crime. "Let us alone," is the complaining growl of every shameful sin. It is contented in darkness and dirt and degradation. A lie never courts an investigation. Disobedience does not want itself discussed. The wrongdoer does not want to be reminded of his misdeeds. And to be let alone is the worst possible experience for vice, for thus its correction would be forever prevented.

Jesus rebuked him, v. 25. There are some testimonials which are useless. Jesus wanted no certificate of character from the devil. What use is it if a bevy of light-headed girls are ready to declare that you are a charming girl? It only

*S. S. Lesson, February 18, 1906.—Mark 1:21-34. Commit to memory vs. 33, 34. Read Matthew 8:14-17; Mark 1:35-45; Luke 4:31-41. Golden Text.—He healed many that were sick.—Mark 1:34.

means that they like you because you resemble them. Or what use is it if a crowd of boys whom no one respects will slap you on the back for a fine fellow? It only means that you are of their sort, and likewise unworthy of respect. These are not the sources to draw references from when you want a situation. Think rather of earning the praises of the wise and good people you know.

Lay sick of a fever, v. 30. In a fever, it is as if some powerful enemy had got control of the forces of the body and were using them to waste and destroy it. But the skilful physician comes, and dislodges the enemy, and then these forces build up and strengthen the body. Sin is the foe that seizes our energies and employs them to work havoc in soul and mind and body. But the Saviour is stronger than sin. He can cast it down from its usurped throne. He can so restore and guide and develop our powers, that they will build up a character and life, strong, beautiful, and helpful.

They tell him, v. 30. A brakeman once got his arm caught between the buffers of two cars. It was not crushed, but held fast, and the slightest backing of the engine would have ground it to pulp. He leaned far out and with his other hand signaled the engineer "Go ahead." Immediately his arm was released. It is wise to tell Jesus of our troubles. He is always in command of the situation, able to bring all His divine and miraculous power to bear upon the difficulty.

She ministered unto them, v. 31. Health is meant for ministry. This woman didn't start on a round of visits among the neighbors, to talk over the marvelous cure. There is a French proverb, "If the young only knew, if the old only could," Jesus said, "I must work, while it is day, the night cometh." The night may come in the shape of illness, and be doubly dark through regret that the day has been wasted and is gone.

THE RUTH OF CHRIST.

(An Orison of Brian.)

O Christ of the reddened Rood!
Thy truth of grace
Show unto me, when 'mid heart battlings
sore
I seek Thy face.
O Christ of the reddened Rood!
Thy light of love
Speed unto me, when 'mid the gloom of
sins
I look above.
O Christ of the reddened Rood!
Thy peace of pain
Grant unto me, when 'mid sin sorrows
deep
I rest in vain.
O Christ of the reddened Rood!
Thy joy of hope
Send unto me, when 'mid soul doubtings
dark
I guideless grope.
O Christ of the reddened Rood!
Thy ruth of grace
Show unto me, when in the last grey hour
I seek Thy face.
D. W. Macdonald in the London Presby-
terian.

LIGHT FOREVER AND EVER.

Bless God for starlight, and He will give you moonlight; praise Him for moonlight, and he will give you sunlight; thank Him for sunlight, and you shall yet come to the land where they need not the light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light forever and ever.—Spurgeon.

Let us look to the planting: God will bless the springing and the blooming.

DO WHAT YOU CAN.

When the disciples of our Lord criticised the act of the woman who anointed him, his reply to their words of complaint was, "She hath done what she could." The Lord wants his people to be doing Christians. What we have done will avail us for the day of judgment. "Do what you can," is all that is asked of any of us. God always holds us responsible for doing our duty; results we are to leave with him. Christ asks no impossibilities, but accepts your smallest gifts and humblest services. This woman had done but little, but that little was considered enough by our Lord. It was the measure of heart feeling that she put into service that gave it such value to the Lord. Christ always recognizes and commands the superior value of heart feeling over outward acts. Do your duty and God will take care of results. If you have "done what you could," then the result will be acceptable to him.

Your ability is the measure of your responsibility. To "whom much is given much will be required." I passed a home where a gentleman was sprinkling the lawn. His little girl, a child of about six years, was helping papa as her childish fancy prompted. She would bring her toy watering pot to her father, and he, reducing the force of the stream, would fill it from the hose.

It mattered little to the grass or flowers whether the water which they needed was given through the large sprinkler or the child's toy watering pot. So it matters little to the world whether you are a man of one, two, five or ten talents, so you give it the best you have. The one talent man giving his best is better than a ten talent man giving his worst. It is not how much you can give to the world, but what you give it. There are a great many more little things to be done than big ones. Do not forget that the things done for ourselves will soon be forgotten, but the things that are done for Christ are immortal.—Selected.

BE CALM.

By G. B. F. Hallock, D.D.
Why fret thee, Soul,
For things beyond thy small control?
Why fret thee, too,
For needed things that thou canst do?
What'er thou canst—help—help!
What'er thou canst not—with no useless
worry bear,
Two things at least, then, Soul need never
cause thee care.

The strong life is the life which gathers up all its forces to live in the present. The burdens of the past and the future weaken by taking away from the concentration essential to full activity. Leave the past with the sovereign grace which looses us from its disheartening weight. The future belongs to God, not to us. Today only is ours.—Zion's Herald.

There are men who cannot know of a need in all the world without its immediately taking the shape of a personal appeal to them. They must go and do this thing. There are such men who seem to have a sort of magnetic attraction for all wrongs and pains. All grievances and woes fly to them to be righted and consoled. They attract need. They cannot sleep at Traos but the soul of Macedonia finds them out and comes across and begs them: "Come and help us." We must all be thankful to know that there are such men among us, however little we may feel that we are such men ourselves; nay, however little we may want to be such men.—Bishop Brooks.