

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

JESUS' DEATH AND BURIAL.*

(By Rev. P. M. MacDonald, B.D.)

I thirst, v. 28. Jesus still says, "I thirst." He thirsts for love. He thirsts for prayer. He thirsts for service. He thirsts for holiness. Whenever the heart of a human being turns to Him with a genuine impulse of penitence, affection or consecration, the Saviour sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied.

They filled a sponge (Rev. Ver.) with vinegar, . . . and put in to his mouth, v. 29. Dr. Stalker tells of two travelers from America who met on board a Rhine steamer. They got into conversation, and each soon learned from what town the other came. They were together for two days, and one of them was overwhelmed with kindness by his companion. At last he ventured to ask the reason, "Well," answered the other, "when the war was going on, I was serving in your native state; and one day our march lay through the town in which you have told me you were born. The march had been a long one; it was a day of intense heat; I felt on the point of dying from thirst, when a kind woman came out of one of the houses and gave me a glass of cold water. And I have been trying to repay, through you, her fellow townsman, the kindness she showed to me." Jesus Himself has assured us, that "whoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, . . . shall in no wise lose his reward."

It is finished, v. 30. We can picture the joy of Columbus, when, after he had well nigh worn his life out in seeking the means necessary for his undertaking, as he had endured the perils of stormy seas and mutinous sailors, he saw at last the sunlight on the peaks of the new continent, and knew that his dream was true, his life work accomplished. We can sympathize with William Wilberforce, the champion of slave emancipation, when on his death bed, a few hours before he breathed his last, the news was brought to him that Parliament had agreed to the expenditure necessary to set the slaves of the West Indies free, and he died with the shouts of the liberated multitudes ringing in his ears. But infinitely greater was the triumph of Jesus Christ, when from the cross He cried, "It is finished." For He had flung open the gates of heaven to all mankind, and He could hear the tramp of the redeemed hosts to the end of time, as they marched with glad songs to their eternal home.

They shall look on Him, v. 37. A pioneer missionary to the Indians of the Northwest relates the following incident. In a schoolroom where he taught and preached, hung a copy of the famous picture, "Behold the Man." A chief came into the room one day, and, pointing to the picture, asked, "Who is that?" "Why are His hands bound?" "Why are those thorns on His head?" Gently and earnestly the missionary told the old, old story. When it was ended, the chief went silently away. But again and again he returned to hear about "the Son of the

great Spirit." Then his visits ceased, and one day the mission 7, riding across the prairie, saw a new-made grave marked with a cross. On inquiry he learned it was the grave of the chief. He had suddenly been taken ill. On his death-bed he said to his sons, "The story of the white man is true. I have it in my heart. When I am dead, put a cross over my grave, that my people may see what is in my heart."

Disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear, v. 38. "One touch of your conquering hand"—that was the request made to the Duke of Wellington by a young officer detailed for some dangerous service. With the touch of his chief tingling through his veins, he was ready to do or dare anything. So, the matchless courage of the cross has often transfigured cowards into heroes. The noblest deeds in human history have owed their inspiration to Calvary. "How shall we dare," says Archbishop Trench, with that cross in view, to lay out our lives for self-pleasing and self-indulgence, taking no part in the sufferings of Christ which we can avoid, choosing ever the feast and never the fast?"

"Love so amazing, so divine,

Demande my soul, my life, my all."

A psalm which cultivates the spirit of gratitude is a psalm which we ought often to read. If we were more grateful, both our joy and our strength would be increased. Gratitude is born in hearts which take the time to count up past mercies.

Throughout the Bible God is the friend of man; and, especially in the earlier books, man speaks to God as a man to his friend. A growing sense of the distance of God and of the reverence due to him inspires the later speech with a becoming humility; but many of the older addresses are marked by an ease, a candor, a bluntness even, which are peculiarly welcome as showing how real to the speakers, and how human, was the God they thus boldly addressed. —From "The Prayers of the Bible,"—John Edgar McFadyen.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

(By Rev. James Rose, D.D.)

SPONGE—The same substance that we are familiar with to-day and which has been known and used from the earliest times. It is an animal, yet it grows like a plant attached to a rock, in the warm sea water near the coast of Syria, Asia Minor and Greece. The sponges are gathered by divers, who pluck them from the rock, and bring them to the surface in a net-work bag suspended round their necks.

ALOES—A resinous aromatic wood, which grows in China, India, and some parts of Arabia, and was apparently found at one time in the Jordan valley. The perfume was obtained by burying the trunks and larger branches of the tree in the ground, until the odorless white wood rotted away, leaving the red, resinous part, which was valued, not only for its scent, but also as a medicine for gout and rheumatism. It was used also for burning as incense, and was often carried about the person as a disinfectant. It has no connection with our drug, aloes, which is the dried juice of a West Indian plant of the same name.

THE CHRISTIAN'S TREASURES.

By Rev. Theodore L. Culyer, D.D.

The constant question in the haunts of business men is, Where shall I find a safe investment? Our divine Master anticipated all such question when he said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Paul was probably accounted a poor man at Corinth; for he earned his daily bread with a tent-maker's needle. But in God's sight he was a millionaire. He could say, "I know whom I have believed, and . . . that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." The great apostle had made Jesus Christ his trustee. He had put his affections, his soul, and his everlasting hopes into his Saviour's hands; and when he reached heaven he knew he would find the great deposit safe. He had laid up nothing that moths could consume or rascals steal. His investments were in the real estate that never depreciates, and the Son of God had charge of it. So may every true Christian—whether in a brown-stone mansion or in an attic—congratulate himself that what is most precious to him is in the keeping of the Saviour.

The grand old tentmaker had other treasures laid up on high also; all the glorious spiritual results of his life were there. Brother and sister in Christ, so are yours and mine, however humble. And whatever we give up for our Master's sake increases our heavenly treasure. The profits which we might make and which we sacrifice in order to keep a clean conscience add to our wealth, for they make us "rich toward God." Hoarding money, stealing time from prayer and Bible reading, nursing popularity, all are wretchedly impoverishing. Giving up for Christ is an enriching process. Whatever we lay down here in order to please and honor our Master will be laid up to our account yonder. Our God is a faithful trustee. He keeps His books of remembrance. He will reward every one according as his works shall be. Two talents will pay a grand dividend; yes, and even one talent will sparkle when some humble mission school teacher presents her class on the last great day and says, "Here am I, Lord, and these children I brought to Thee!" When we speak of salvation as by grace and not "of works," we must not forget that other truth that God will judge us all according to our works. They will be laid up there. If the selfish sinner's "wages" are paid in hell, the Christian's wages are paid in heaven.

Compound interest will make some of Christ's servants magnificent millionaires. All that Paul gave up of worldly pelf and profit and fame and ease and emolument will stand to his credit up there; and the results of all this life of self-sacrifice for Jesus have been going on accumulating every day for eighteen centuries, and who can tell what they will amount to when the judgment morning breaks? People sometimes speak in a pitying tone of "poor ministers with small salaries." Wait until the treasure chests are opened up yonder, and see if any one will call that hard-working soul-winner poor. John Bunyan when in jail comforted himself with the thought that he had "rich lordships" in those souls whom he had led to Jesus. What a Croesus the old tinker of Bedford will be when he comes into full possession of his inheritance!

*S.S. Lesson, May 24, 1908. John 19: 29-42. Commit to memory vs. 39, 40. Study John 19: 17-42. GOLDEN TEXT—Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.—1 Corinthians 15: 3.