

The Quiet Hour.

The Call of Moses.

S. S. Lesson, Dec. 1, 1901; Exodus 3: 1-2.
Golden Text—Exod. 3: 12. Certainly I will be with thee.

BY REV. J. MCD. DUNCAN, B.D.

Now Moses kept the flock, v. 1. "I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit," said Amos, the earliest of Israel's prophets. "I am a peasant's son, my father, grandfather and great-grandfather were all genuine peasants," said Luther, the great leader of the Reformation. God has always put honor on work. Adam was a gardener; Moses, like the patriarchs, was a shepherd; Jesus was a carpenter; John was a fisherman; Paul was a tentmaker. To have plenty of honest work and to do it well, is to stand in the direct line of succession to the best and greatest of our race.

And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, v. 2. There are three great facts about God, set forth when He is represented under the figure of fire: (1) His intense activity. In the spring time the rays of heat from the sun's central fires awaken sleeping nature. The furnace fires give their wonderful speed to the locomotive and the steamship. So God is constantly active in nature and history. (2) His mighty power. Fire is one of the most resistless of his masters. There is no force that can successfully oppose the might of God. (3) His perfect holiness. A ray of light passes through a room impregnated with disease germs, but it will carry no contagion. In like manner the divine holiness blazes with dazzling brightness amid the impurities of earth.

And the bush was not consumed, v. 2. Our Church has inherited from the Church of Scotland the banner which bears the emblem of the burning bush, and the motto: "NEC TAMEN CONSUMEBATUR"—"yet it was not consumed." This was a fitting motto for a Church born in days of fierce persecution, and harried by Claverhouse and his dragons. It is a suitable motto for any true branch of the Church of Christ or any true believer. No Church in which God dwells can be destroyed, and no individual in whose heart He resides can perish.

Why the bush is not burnt, v. 3. How often and in how many lands it has seemed as if the Church of Christ were doomed to a certain destruction! In Rome, when Nero lighted his gardens with living torches made of the pitch-covered bodies of Christians; in France, when the Huguenots were massacred by thousands; in Scotland, when the Covenanters were hunted down like wild beasts; in England, when the Puritans were driven from their native shores; in China, the other day, when Christian missionaries were banished, and native Christians tormented and murdered, the enemies of the Church have triumphed and her friends have been saddened. Why has the bush not been burnt? Why have all her foes been unable to destroy the Church? Because God is in the midst of her. She lives because He lives. Her victory is assured because the Living God dwells in her.

The place whereon thou standest is holy ground, v. 5. We need to learn that God is holy as well as good and gracious. For the long period covered by the Old Testament the divine holiness was kept most prominent-

ly in view. But the New Testament does not allow us to forget the great lesson of the Old. For in Hebrews we read (12: 28, 29). "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire."

I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, v. 6. It is on this passage that our Lord founds His argument for the resurrection, against the Sadducees (Mark 12: 26). The argument is that men cannot exhaust the friendship of God in the brief span of human life, and that there must therefore be another life in which they may discover and explore the unknown oceans and continents of that friendship. Imagine, as some one has put it, the world to be one great and perfect gem and this gem given to one man. The gift would entitle the recipient to use that gem until he had come to the end of its purchasing power. So, when God calls men His friends, He endows them with the right to avail themselves of His friendship until they have drawn upon all its resources. But that is to say that the friendship between God and men must be eternal and that it cannot be interrupted by death.

Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh? v. 11. This is the same Moses who in his self-confidence had supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them (Acts 7: 25). But it is Moses stripped of all self-sufficiency and ready to cast himself on the strength of the Almighty. He was on the edge of a great discovery—whence true strength comes.

Prayer.

Our Heavenly Father, do thou write thy law upon our heart, and give us a disposition towards obedience, so that every word which thou hast spoken may become the rule of our conduct. Grant us the continual ministry of Thy Holy Spirit to enlighten the mind, to sanctify the will, to subdue and control the whole heart, so that there may be no disobedience or rebellion in us, but a quiet and loving delight in all goodness and holiness. We thank thee thou hast addressed a speech to every heart; may each hear the word thou hast sent it. Preserve the little one that he may become a strong man, speak to the aged that he may renew his youth in the immortal hope of fellowship with the spirits of just men made perfect. Address the busy man who is seeking his fortune in the dust, and excite in his soul a hunger which the bread of earth cannot satisfy. Tell the afflicted that the time of weakness is but for a moment, and the time of immortal health is as the duration of God. Sanctify all varieties of discipline and training through which we pass, and at last, washed in the blood of the everlasting covenant, sanctified and inspired by the Holy Spirit, may we enter in through the gates into the city whose hills are light, whose walls are jasper, and whose streets are gold. And this we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.—Selected.

We often think of heaven as if that alone were our Father's house. No; we are God's children, and we are in our Father's house here and now.

Good People We All Have Met

REV. DANIEL YOUNGBLOOD.

Rev. Daniel Youngblood comes of true blue Presbyterian stock. He is third in a line of Presbyterian preachers in his family. Was well grounded in the Bible, the Shorter Catechism and the Confession of Faith. A bright boy too, who graduated with honors at college, and who was a fine student at the seminary and came away, thinking in his heart that what he had not learned of theology, and had not planned as best methods of work and did not know of religious experiences, was not worth learning, or planning, or knowing.

And he was earnestly and zealously devoted to his Master's service. He seems to see how much land there is yet to be possessed and he means to do his part in possessing it.

His zeal is unquenchable, his opinions unchangeable and he himself unshakable. If you downed him he is up again as quick as a cork in a basin of water.

His first charge was a church with a session of grey-headed men. Now we all know that grey-headed men have lived long enough to know some things from experience; that they have learned to be cautious; that they believe in "hastening slowly" in most matters, and zealous brother Youngblood would map out work for one month which if practicable, they judged would require a year. He proposed to change things, and stir them up generally. It thymonstrated gently, why he just smiled on them pityingly, and with a degree of forbearance really creditable, all things being considered. He whispers to you confidentially, "the dear old brethren are just a little old foggyish, you know," and straightway calls up some young men and women, and before the session has fully decided that the work can be done, they have it well under way.

And yet Rev. Daniel Youngblood is a good young man and a fine preacher, too.

So pretty, so jovial, so full of healthy gladness is Mrs. Facebothways. You find yourself beginning to smile as soon as she comes in sight. And she is so kind hearted, so ready to help in every church enterprise. So loyal to her friends and to her church, she has already trained her bright little daughter to be a staunch Presbyterian.

It is a rare thing that Mrs. Facebothways is ever missing from a service on Sabbath or on Wednesday evening.

"Well," you say, "what is the matter? I find no fault with her. You describe a very charming young woman, I think."

Yes, but—she wants to go to church faithfully on Sundays, and on Monday she wants as faithfully to go to her card party or perhaps a dance. She belongs to all the social clubs of her town that are worth joining. Her visiting list contains the names of all the most fashionable set, and what with receptions, and at homes, high teas, euchre parties, book clubs, plays and operas, the good seed is choked, and our dear, bright-faced young friend does not bring forth those fruits that should appear, and that those who love her truest welfare would love to see grow.

Her heart is divided. She is trying to serve God and Mammon.

She thinks it is lovely for staid, grey-haired women to be good, and to live out cheerfully and quietly a social life that is religiously unworldly. And some day she means to live like that too, but just now she thinks she has been "bred red to death" if she could not have what she calls a good time; that is, if she couldn't give a hand to the world