

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

TEMPERANCE LESSON.*

Rev. J. W. McMillan, D.D.

Love, v. 8. Love is a wonderful worker. It has the secret of doing the most with the least effort. One man was asked for whom he labored most. He answered, "For my friends." And being asked for whom he labored least, he answered, "For my friends." Love does most, and yet thinks least of what it does.

Hath fulfilled the law, v. 8. One of the gigantic eagles of Scotland carried away an infant from beside the hearth of a cottage. The whole village ran after it; but the eagle soon perched on a lofty eyrie, and every one despairing of the child's being recovered. A sailor tried to climb the steep cliff, but was forced to turn back. A robust Highlander, accustomed to the hills, next tried it, but he missed his footing and tumbled down to the bottom. When no one else would venture, a poor peasant woman came forward. Carefully she put her foot first on one shelf of the rock, then on a second, then on a third. She clung with her hands to bunches of grass and bushes and projecting points of rock. So she climbed to the very top of the crag and came down with the baby safe in her arms. Why did that woman succeed where strong and practiced climbers had failed? Because she was the mother of the child. Love could do more than strength or experience. It imparted a courage and skill that nothing else could give.

Awake, v. 11. The sin and danger of hosts of people is indifference. They do not know, and will not inquire, and refuse to listen to anyone telling them of the peril they are in. It is told that a hostful of jolly young men once was floating on the Niagara river above the falls. The water was smooth and the current slow. They took in the oars and began to sing and laugh. Soon they heard a voice hailing them from the shore, "Young men, ahoy! The rapids are below you!" They shouted back with some mocking reply, and went on with their fun. Again they heard the voice, "Young men, ahoy! You are getting near the rapids!" But they only waved their hands in derision. In a minute they were startled by a wave washing into their skiff. They jumped up and looked around. Already the water was white with foam, and the deep roar of the cataract was getting loud. They seized the oars and pulled for their lives, but it was too late. Let us pray and watch that we do not smile or sleep away in carelessness our chance of eternal life. Many a soul has been lost through simple neglect of the great salvation offered in the gospel.

Drunkness, v. 13. A rich profligate kept two monkeys for his amusement. Once he peeped into his dining room, where he and his friends had been enjoying themselves at a wine supper, and found his pets mimicking the recent party. They mounce and cote, helped themselves to the wine, and gestured and jabbered as they had seen their master and his guests doing. Soon they got merry, and jumped all about the room. Then they got to fighting on the floor and tearing each other's hair. The drinking man stood in amazement. "What," he said, "is this a picture of me? Do even the brutes rebuke me?" He was ever afterwards a sober man. If every man who gets drunk could only remain sober to watch himself, we may be sure that there would be fewer drunkards. So shameful a sight ought to keep one from drink.

* S.S. 27th June, Romans 13: 8-14. Commit to memory vs. 8, 10. Golden Text—Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.—Romans 13: 14.

Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, v. 14. This is the only sure secret of victory over the appetite for drink and over all other evil desires—to have our natures transformed by the power of Jesus. Robert Louis Stevenson, in his volume, *In The South Seas*, refers to the capture of an American whaler, Mr. Whalon, by the cannibals of Ilia-Oa, one of the Marquesan Islands, and his rescue by Kekela, a native Christian, to whom President Lincoln sent a reward for his gallant deed. In his letter of thanks Kekela said, "As to this friendly deed of mine in saving Mr. Whalon, its seed came from your great land, and was brought by certain of your countrymen, who had received the love of God. It was planted in Hawaii, and I brought it to plant in this land and in these dark regions, that they might receive the best of all that is god and true, which is love."

PRAYER.

Almighty God, our prayer is that we may live worthily before Thee, serving Thee day and night according to Thy will, and showing forth out of a pure and noble life Thy truth and Thy grace as revealed in Jesus Christ. It is in the name so sweet, so dear, the one great good name we now come before Thee. Our prayer is to be lifted into Thy likeness, to be set amongst Thine angels for purity and strength, yet never to forget that we are men of the earth, the children of time, redeemed with the great price of the blood of Christ. We desire to set ourselves to Thy service with our whole heart, and with both our hands; nothing would we do reluctantly or of compulsion, but everything with the ease of love, with the gladness of a true heart's loyalty—then shall we never be weary, in our soul there shall be no faintness. Amen.

BELIEVING IN THE BEST.

A man's best side is his true side. When we see a man whose life is a mass of faults and sins doing a good thing, it is pretty small business for us to discount that good thing because we know of the many defects that he has. Indeed, the more we know of his defects, the more eager ought we to be to recognize his merit whenever it appears, and slight though it is. For it is only by the encouragement of recognition and approval that the little good in any one grows and amounts to anything. We could not stand it if our every effort toward decency and virtue were critically weighed and tested in the light of our shortcomings. Christ does not treat us sinners in that way. He forgives, ignores, forgets, blots out, the multitudinous sins, and he rejoices in any slightest show of righteousness. For he knows that our sins misrepresent us—as God's children; and that our feeble efforts to do well are the evidence of our real selves as God made us. To believe in others when they do well, and to keep right on believing in them when they do ill, is to show that we understand them as they really are.—Sunday School Times.

SUNSHINE AND SHADOWS.

It is said that blessings always come in disguise. Every rose has its thorn; every sweet its bitter. The blacker the storm cloud, the more intensely bright the chain of fire stretched across its bosom. The darker the night, the brighter the day. After all, the shadows may be the price we pay for our sunshine. I have sometimes wondered if sorrow is not only just the interest on all the joy God has given us.—J. Marvin Nicholls.

Hurry not only spoils work, but spoils life also.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. John Ross, D.D.

Rioting—The apostle refers to the bacchanalian orgies once prevalent in Rome which were suppressed by the republic, but had appeared again, under the name of Liberalia, among the moral enormities of the empire. The initiated met together at night, feasted and drank to excess, and when heated with wine, indulged in the coarsest excesses. All modesty was thrown aside, and men and women vied with one another in tramping under foot every moral, legal and social restraint. Forgeries and false wills were devised, lying accusations were framed against the innocent, poisonings and murders were common. If any member protested against the excesses, his voice was drowned by drums, cymbals, or the shouting chorus of the revelers. Sometimes he was killed, and his body spirited away.

Wantonness—The moral life of men never reached a lower ebb than in Rome under the empire. Wealth poured into the capital from every province. Officials returned with huge fortunes, plundered from the subject races, to abandon themselves to the most shameless dissipation. There was no high moral ideal nor any religious restraint, and the infamous example of the court of a Tiberius and a Nero made Rome a cesspool, into which the dregs of debauchery flowed from every slum in the universe.

THE EVENING HOUR.

The happiest time of the day is the evening hour, when the labor is ended, the supper over, and, in the gathering twilight, the family sit on the piazza in pleasant revelry or conversation. The gentleness of the closing day as the night approaches and the stars come out is one that induces sweet thoughts of other days and nights that are gone with their blue skies and bright stars, their memories and histories. It is a time to look back and trace the diverse paths where a protecting Providence has gone before. It is a time to lift the shadows and let the sunshine of happy days shine in; a time to contemplate the loving mercy that bloomed as lilies by every roadside, even when the rains fell and the thunders were in the skies. It is a time to look forward to fields as yet untrod, to places unvisited, to pleasures unexplored, and through and beyond them all, to another twilight when we shall sit and wait, not for the coming stars, but for the new day, and think of the joy it shall bring us, and the delights we shall share there, the friends we shall meet there, and the songs we shall sing there! Yes, the twilight is a good hour, when God comes in the still, small voice, softens our asperities, mellows our moods, and gives the soul a chance to seek its best companions.—United Presbyterian.

I wish that I may learn nothing here that I can not continue in the other world; that I may do nothing here but deeds that will bear fruit in heaven.—Richter.

Christianity has able advocates than its professed defenders, in those quiet and humble men and women who in the light of it and the strength of it live holy, beautiful and self-denying lives.

Friendship cannot be permanent unless it becomes spiritual. There must be a fellowship in the deepest things of the soul, community in the highest thoughts, sympathy with the best endeavors.—Hugh Black.