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THOUGHTS FOR THE OLD.

It is weary to be old!
For the world has lost its beauty and is strangely drear and cold,
And the wine of life has vanished and its dregs alone are left,
And the aged ones are lonely, as they linger sore bereft.

It is dreary to be old!
To outlive one's strength and beauty like a story oft retold;
Times and fashions change and weary, people grow beyond our reach;
Memory fails; and footsteps falter; slow and stammering grows the speech.

It is blessed to be old!
For the nearer draws the city with its streets of shining gold;
And the threads of life drop idly from the listless, idle hands,
While the ears are daily listening for the keel upon the sands.

It is blessed to be old!
For so closely lies the future with its treasures manifold,
There the dear ones are assembled, strangely drawing us to come;
It is drear and lonely waiting! It is blessed going home!

—Selected.

The Sabbath-School.**INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.**

[FROM PELOUBET'S NOTES.]

Third Quarter. - Lesson 7. - August 15.
JESUS TEACHING HUMILITY. - JOHN xiii. 1-17.

GOLDEN TEXT. - *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.* - JOHN xiii. 17.
LOVING TO THE END. - Vers. 1-3.
Now before the feast of the passover. Just as he was about to sit down with his disciples to the Paschal feast. When Jesus knew that his hour was come. In the full consciousness of his approaching agony and passion. Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. The end both in time and in accomplishment; that is, he loved them till death broke in on his life of love; he loved them till love had finished its purpose in them by their redemption; loved them despite their quarrels and contentions, that by love he might brood and perfect the new life in them.

And supper being ended. The original is being in progress. The devil having now put, etc. The devil was the sower, but the soil was ready to receive the seed.

Jesus knowing, etc. These verses are given in order to set forth more clearly the condescension and love of Jesus in the act of washing the disciples' feet.

THE STRIFE. - Luke xxii. 24-30. One occasion of the act which follows seems to have been a contention among the disciples which should be greatest, just as they were sitting down to supper.

WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET. - Vers. 4-11.
He riseth from supper. The Paschal supper began by the head of the company taking the first cup of wine mingled with water, and speaking over it the "thanksgiving." This cup was then passed around. The next part of the ceremonial was for the head of the company to rise and "wash hands." It was at this point of the supper that Jesus took the basin and ewer which were at hand, and taught them this lesson. Laid aside his garments. Girded himself. Thus Christ put on the ordinary habit of a servant for a servant's work.

He poureth water into a basin. In this feet washing the water was poured over the feet, and the basin held under. And began to wash the disciples' feet. The disciples sat down to the meal without washing their feet, after a hot and dusty walk. As they had no servants, the feet washing should have been done by one of the disciples; the things necessary for it are at hand. The disciples are still disputing who shall undertake to do it. Jesus then rises himself to perform this duty of a servant.

Then cometh he to Simon Peter; in his turn to be washed. Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Dost thou act as my menial?

What I do thou knowest not now. A rebuke to Peter. His words had almost implied that the Lord's act was wholly out of place. But thou shalt know hereafter. Christ explained the meaning after the trans- action was over (ver. 12-17). There are things in every life which we cannot understand now, - troubles, disappointments, sickness, poverty, death; but the time will come when all will be plain.

Peter said unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. He thought the act of the Lord dishonored him. If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Cannot share my kingdom, my character, my work. Why? Because (1) the first condition of discipleship was submission to Christ. (2) Because this washing was symbolical of spiritual cleansing.

Not my feet only, but my hands and my head, or face. The war- hearted Peter, on learning that ex- clusion would be the consequence of not being washed, can hardly have enough of a cleansing so precious.

He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet. A man who has bathed does not need to bathe again when he reaches home, but only to wash the dust off his feet, then he is wholly clean. So also in

the spiritual life, a man whose moral nature has once been thoroughly purified need not think that this has been all undone if in the walk through life he contracts some stains; these must be washed away, and then he is once more wholly clean. And ye are clean. They were truly converted, and had been cleansed from sin. But not all Judas.

JESUS EXPLAINS HIS SYMBOLIC ACT. - Vers. 12-17. And was set down again. This means in the reclining position customary at meals. Know ye what I have done to you? This is to direct their attention to what he had done, and to the interpretation.

Ye call me Master and Lord. One who has authority over you. You accept my instructions, and obey my commands.

If I then, etc. Ye ought also to wash one another's feet. Apparently this is what they had just been unwilling to do. Each one had wanted the others to do it.

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. There are two ways of imitating the example of another person. One is to imitate the form of his example, the other to imitate his spirit. One may do exactly, in other circumstances, as another has done, and yet entirely fail of imitating his example, because all that made it of value was left out. To go through a ceremonial of washing others' feet, as the pope sometimes does, is not doing as Christ did at this time. Jesus did not institute a rite, but showed us the true spirit. He that serves others; he that does the humblest service in order to relieve their wants, or cleanse their souls from sin; he that forgets himself and seeks no honor, no high place, but only to serve and to help, - he does to them as Christ did to the disciples.

The servant is not greater than his lord. If Jesus their Lord did much humble service for others, every one of his disciples should do the same. If ye know these things. It is sometimes difficult for men even to perceive their duty. Happy are ye if ye do them. Duties involving humiliations, though seemingly repulsive, are found to be attended with the highest blessedness (Matt. 7: 24; Luke 11: 28).

BEFORE PENS.

The chisel was employed for inscribing on stone, wood and metal. It was so sharpened as to suit the material operated on, and was dexterously handled by all early artists. The style, a sharp-pointed instrument of metal, ivory or bone, was used for writing on wax tablets. The style was unsuitable for holding a fluid, hence a species of reed was employed for writing on parchment. These styles and reeds were carefully kept in cases, and the writers had a sponge, knife, and pumice-stone, compasses for measuring, scissors for cutting, a pounce for pointing out the beginning and end of each line, a rule to draw and divide the lines into columns, a glass containing sand, and another with writing fluid. These were the chief implements used for centuries to register facts and events.

Reeds continued to be used until the eighth century, though quills were known in the middle of the seventh. The earliest author who uses the word "penna" for a writing pen is Isidorus, who lived in that century; and toward the end of it a Latin sonnet, "To a pen," was written by Anglo-Saxon.

But though quills were known at this early period, they came into general use very slowly; for in 1433 a present of a bundle of quills was sent from Venice by a monk with a letter in which he says, "Show this bundle to brother Nicolas, that he may choose a quill."

The only other material to which we would refer is ink, the composition and colors of which were various. The black was made of burnt ivory and the liquor of the cuttle fish. We do not know what other ingredient was used, or how it was manufactured, but these ancient manuscripts prove that the ink was of a superior description.

Red, purple, silver and gold inks were also used. The red was made from vermilion and carmine, the purple from the murex. - Golden Days.

HAVE A PURPOSE.

Young men, have a purpose in your heart. Now, what is your purpose in life? Is it that under all circumstances, you will do what you think is right? Or is it to become rich at the expense of principle and right? The first purpose you should have is to care for yourself. Young men nowadays don't; and when the body is wrecked, they hobble through life, making everybody about them miserable. Find out what diet best agrees with you, and adhere to it. Daniel began by abstaining from wine. This would be a good start for you, young man. Next, take care of your intellect. Study; if you have intellect - there are some young men who don't know whether or not they have any intel-

lect - improve it. Many hard-worked men have acquired profound education by being studious during small intervals of leisure. Get an hour a day if you can get no more. Devote half of it to the study of the Bible, and divide the remaining thirty minutes, say between astronomy, botany, and geology. Do this one year, and you will be surprised at what you have accomplished.

Then take care of your manners. The manners of Americans are degenerating. There was a time when a young man would not offend a lady by puffing cigar smoke into her face. Now I see it done on the street cars every day. Imitate the sweetness and gentleness of Daniel. Be affable, suave, courteous, and kind. Never utter a thoughtless word that will pain. Start in life with the principle, "I'll be a gentleman, come what will." - Dr. H. M. Scudder.

DOING ERRANDS FOR CHRIST.

"Mamma," said a little five-year old boy, "I wished Jesus lived on earth now."

"Why, my darling?"
"Because I should have liked so much to have done something for him."

"But what could such a little bit of a fellow as you are have done for the Saviour?"
The child hesitated for a few moments, then looked up into his mother's face and said: "Why, mother, I could have run on all his errands for him."

"So you could, my child, and so you shall. Here is a glass of jelly, and some oranges I was going to send to poor old sick Margaret by the servant, but I will let you take them instead, and do an errand for the Saviour, for when upon earth he said, 'Inasmuch as ye do it unto one of the least of these, ye do it unto me.' So remember, children, whenever you do any kind act for anybody because you love Jesus, it is just the same as if the Saviour were now living on the earth and you were doing it for him." - The Illustrators.

HOW TO TREAT BOYS.

Get hold of the boy's heart. Yonder locomotive comes like a whirlwind down the track, and a regiment of armed men may seek to arrest it in vain. It would crush them and plunge them unheeding on. But there is a little lever in its mechanism that at the pressure of a man's hand will slacken its speed, and bring it, panting and still, like a whipped spaniel at your feet. By a similar little lever is the vast steamer guided hither and yonder on the ocean, in spite of wind and tide. That sensitive and responsive spot by which a boy's life is controlled is his heart. With your grasp gently and firmly on that helm, you may pilot him whither you will. Never doubt that he has a heart. Bad and wilful boys very often have the tenderest hearts, hidden away somewhere beneath the incrustations of sin or behind barricades of pride. It is your business to get at that heart; to keep hold of it by sympathy, confiding in him, manifestly working only for his good; by little indirect kindnesses to those he loves, or even to his pet dog. If you meet him on the street recognize him, shake his hand, show that you have some interest in him. Provide him some little pleasure; set him at some little service of trust for you; love him; love him practically. Any way and every way rule him through his heart. His love will be your reward.

SAVED BY KINDNESS.

We will call him Jim, for I do not remember his name. He had lost all respectability, and was a common gutter drunkard. His family had disowned him, and would not recognize him when they met him. Occasionally he would get a job at the stables where Dr. Davis kept his horses. One morning the Doctor laid his hand on his shoulder and said:

"Jim, I wish you would give up the drink."

"There was something very like a quiver of the man's lips as he answered:
"If I thought you cared, I would, but there is a great gulf between you and me."

"Have I made any gulf, Jim? Think a moment before you answer."

"No - you - haven't."

"If you had been a millionaire could I have treated you more like a gentleman?"

"No, you couldn't."

"I do care, Jim."

"Say it again, won't you?" There were tears in the man's eyes now.
"I do care, Jim," with a tender little emphasis on the Jim.
"Dr. Davis, I'll never touch another drop of liquor as long as I live. Here's my hand on it."
This was fifteen years ago, and "Jim" is to-day the respectable and respected Mr. —

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