

# THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

## BY THE REV. IRA W. HENDERSON, THE FAMOUS DIVINE.

Subject: Co-operation.

Brooklyn, N. Y.—Preaching at the Irving Square Presbyterian Church, 14th Street and 5th Avenue, on the above text, the Rev. Ira W. Henderson, the pastor, took as his text Ex. 17:12, "Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up by his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun."

And Joshua and the army of Israel, upon the field of conflict, co-operated. And Amalek and his host were discomfited.

The text and the circumstances are illustrative of the law of co-operation that rules in every phase of life. Without co-operation life could not be maintained. It is a central necessity to the preservation of the integrity of the world of men and of nature.

Moses relied upon God and God placed His confidence in Moses. Moses leaned upon Aaron and Hur for support. Joshua looked to Moses for victory. The inter-relationship of them all was inevitable. Their interdependence was natural. Their ability to do each other and with God gave them the victory. Moses was essential to the success of the movement. So was God. But not less essential was the faithful co-operation of Aaron and Hur and Joshua and the army. Moses made no effort to do Joshua's work. Joshua reveals no desire to attempt the labors for which Moses was inspired. Aaron and Hur stuck to the task to which God had called them. The army followed its leaders with fidelity and effect. No one tried to do the other man's work. But each man did his own. And they did it with unanimity and with forcefulness. They co-operated. Each did his best for the good of all, in his own way and in his own station. And they were victorious in a hard fight.

Co-operation is the law of all life. Turn wheresoever you will and you will observe the evidences of the working of the law. Color depends upon the blending of the primary colors in the heavens above. Nothing removes the light and the differentials that all shades will disappear. The tree cannot germinate or bud or blossom or fruit or mature alone. It is by the beneficent and self-sacrificing operations of the sun and the wind and the dew and the rain and the earth and the night that the tree can live. And if these fail to co-operate with timeliness and sufficiency the tree will die. If any one of them fails to do its part for a time the life of the tree will be impoverished and its future put in jeopardy. Not otherwise is it with man. Were it not for the co-operation of his fellows and of the natural order that is manifest about him he could not long endure. For man is as dependent upon the co-operation of nature as is the tree. That which the tree needs he needs, and more abundantly and insistently. That which the tree requires for its preservation and sustenance he must have and more. For as his life is more expansive than the life of the tree, so his requirements are more varied. And that which writes itself as the law of the life of the man and of the trees demands obedience in every sphere and phase of life.

That which is true of life in the broad is true of life in its narrower relations. It is true of commercial life. For the complex and marvellous commercial society that exists in our day would not be without and depends absolutely upon the faithful and intelligent co-operation of every department and every member of the society. The co-operation of the more illustrative of the laws of interdependence and co-operation than trade. We sit down to our humblest meals only to be brought face to face with the absolute dependence which we have placed, ordinarily unconsciously, upon multitudes of men and women, in the fields and the shops, upon the railways and the seas, to secure and to provide and to deliver to us the common necessities of life. Their co-operation gives us our meals. Our co-operation offers them a chance to labor and to live. Not otherwise is it in mechanics. All movement is dependent upon co-operation. And the slightest lack of co-operation upon the part of the simplest and smallest essential portion of a mechanical device will mar the harmonious and perfect working of the whole and may render the mechanism, regardless of its beauty or its design, useless and inefficient. You may build the most perfect of machines, and you may construct the most perfect of structures, but if all its parts do not engage, if you fail to attach it to the source of primal power, your project is as useless as thought it never were. And so it is in military affairs. An army wins, if it wins at all, because of the co-operation of divisions. Co-operation won for the Old Guard and for Wellington deathless fame that night on the field at Waterloo as the sun set upon the power and the imperial overlordship of Napoleon. In the same way, the Old Guard and the Old Guard won the face of impending disaster made the Old Guard rally with devotion and splendid bravery about the standards of a defeated emperor and exact a blood bought victory. Co-operation made it possible to write history differently. Co-operation taught and enabled the heroes of a hundred battlefields to die with glory upon the field of honor. Similarly, co-operation is essential in social life. No man can live apart from society. He must live as related with it, dependent upon it, and obligated to it. The good of each must be the concern of all, and the welfare of all the solicitude of each. We must all do our part, or the fabric we have constructed and of which we are the interior cannot endure. And the health and perfection of our social system is in direct proportion to the co-operation of each and every individual citizen toward the preservation and intensification of the best and salient features that are woven into the texture of our social order.

The law of co-operation is nowhere more impressively and gloriously explicated than in the movements of the galaxies that, through endless generations, course the heavens that are spread in matchless beauty by the hand of God above our heads. The contemplation of what would happen if the interplanetary and intergalactic forces that maintain the equilibrium and control the courses of the superheated bodies that crowd the heavens cease, inspires awe. Ceaselessly, majestically, noiselessly, so far as we are aware, they rush through space; each in its own orbit, each attending strictly to the laws that are operative in its own career. The correlation of forces that is active among them is the secret of their transcendent movement through the charted and uncharted regions of the sky.

Co-operation is necessary and effective in the forwarding of evil as it is in the promulgation and propulsion of that which is good. It is the watchword of every evil band and the hope of every evil design. Evil must be compacted and allied to become largely effective. And the best of organized forces to-day are to be found in the camp and army of those whose god is the devil and whose ways take hold on hell. That is the reason why evil triumphs so often. No man can live apart from society. So long as a few of the wicked have ruled the world of decent men and women. The wicked know the value of co-operation. They know by experience. They have proved its power. They are expert in the art and exercise of combination. Co-operation of the reigning order of self-seeking exploiters of the people kept feudalism alive as long as it lived, and without such combination it never could have lived at all. It was the combination and co-operation of the forces of unbridled extravagance and an unphilosophical temper that made Paris reek with blood in the days of the Revolution.

Nowhere is this co-operation and correlation and combination of men and of motives, of ideas and of purposes, of influences and forces, more indispensable than in the church of that living God who hath revealed Himself unto us in Jesus Christ. It is provided in what we call the New Testament that shall be of eternal import. It is elemental. And our co-operation as Christians must be continuous. It must be for constructive as well as for destructive service. It must be an augmenting force.

Co-operation must be continuous in our affairs as it is everywhere in nature. It cannot be spasmodic. It must be connected. It must be subject to regularity. Also it must be constructive. We are too prone to ally ourselves to the wrong side of the world. We are too ready to present a program for constructive effort, to assume the labor of direction, and to strive for the accomplishment of the result at which we aim. We are too spasmodic. We do not keep at it. We fail to appear as we should. Our co-operation further should be augmentative. That is to say, that under its exercise we ought to gain energy, kinetic and potential. The more we co-operate the abler we should become, the more efficient we will become.

The church of Jesus Christ can never do that supreme work to which her Lord has called her until her members exercise that spirit and capacity for co-operation that we have stipulated as essential, among themselves. So long as we magnify small things, so long as each the other's work will do the while he leaves undone his own, so long as we quarrel and bicker and growl at the failings and frailties and incapacities of each other, so long as we magnify the labors of Moses and the man of war, and women of capability and constructive capacity kick against the pricks of the call of God, so long as we forget sympathy and courtesy and charity and patience, so long as we forget to minister the same favor and forgiveness to our brethren in the Lord that we administer to ourselves, we shall not progress. We must co-operate in love and forbearance, we must know only the strife of singlehearted fidelity and service for the common good.

Further, we need co-operation between the church and the community. It will not do for us to shut ourselves apart from the ways and the concerns of the busy world. It is for us to transform the world, to co-operate with every effort, however officious and however semi-ultimate, that has for its purpose the elevation and betterment of the race; it is for us to be interested actively, to carry the leaven of the Gospel of Christ into the multifarious affairs of a condense and civil service to be lovingly, openly, positively interested in everything that makes for the weal of man.

And lastly, but by no means least, we need co-operation between pastors and peoples. Moses got weary, and he was a man of unusual and special privilege and power. Men of less power get weary, too. Even preachers get tired. Even shepherds grow fatigued. It is hard work to draw a load of drones, to pacify and to lead men and women who in the grace and mercy of God should know better. Good news is a heavy load when Aaron and Hur upheld the tired arms of Moses. Perhaps some churches that are wondering why they do not prosper with God and man, would do well to recall that Aaron and Hur would sustain the overloaded forces of a ministerial Moses. Let us co-operate.

**Punishment.** The purpose of punishment is not to inflict an endless pain, but to awaken the soul of the offender to his own folly. It is just as much a manifestation of God's paternal love and care as the most pleasant experience of life. Punishment must be inflicted that is long and severe, but underlying it is God's unconquerable purpose to save.—Rev. R. E. Byers, Universalist, Denver, Col.

**The Apex.** Christian living is living raised to its highest power.

## EPWORTH LEAGUE LESSONS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20.

Hearing and Doing (James 1: 19-25).

Passages for reference; Ezek 33: 20-32; Matt. 13: 14, 15; Rom. 2: 13; 2 Cor. 4: 3, 4.

Continual church attendance sometimes makes us careless. The most regular and reliable attendants are often listless listeners. We may need Jesus' reminder to Mary's sister, who sat and listened: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things" (Luke 10: 41). We may be so concerned about ushering, about choir work, about getting members for the League, about planning some form of church work, as to utterly miss the meat of a message. A celebrated pastor was called to the bedside of one of his most faithful members and church attendants. The first greeting was, "Prepare me to meet God." The pastor's surprise brought this reply: "I am without Christ. I never heard the service. I sat in my pew and planned the week's secular business." Even our daily Bible readings have little profit. We read much as the Roman Catholic says his beads—a duty done with hope of gaining merit. We need look into one or two verses until it becomes a gladdening, liberating message to us. We need, then, to listen and read with the purpose of getting personal help and direction. The Sunday school class must not be attended or taught listlessly. Some of God's gems can be added to my treasure if I am alert. No bright-brained young person will whisper and laugh with another in a religious service.

Theorizers and exhorters are less needed than practicing examples. Jesus showed how to do a thing and then glowed with the resultant beauty. We are to follow suit. Doctrines count less than righteousness. "He that doth good, shall righteousness be his" (1 John 3: 7). Leaders in deeds is the demand of the day. We must be practical in preaching and practicing. "But the tongue can no man tame" (James 3: 8). "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16: 32).

## CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR NOTES

OCTOBER TWENTIETH.

Topic—The duties of the day. Prov. 24: 30-34; Rom. 12: 11.

Trust God for to-day. Ex. 14: 10-14. Seek divine wisdom daily. 1 Kings 22: 57.

Prize Him daily. Ps. 98: 1-13. Work to-day. Matt. 21: 28-31. Report to-day. Heb. 3: 7-13. Live carefully. 2 Pet. 3: 12-14.

Sleep is essential to work—enough sleep; but too much sleep is fatal to work (Prov. 24: 33).

If one is a sluggard, there is nothing sluggish about the approach of poverty. It comes with a soldier's energy, a robber's craft (Prov. 24: 34).

Industry is not always set down among the Christian graces; but many a grace is dependent upon it (Rom. 12: 11).

"Fervent in spirit" is literally "boiling in spirit" with soul at the boiling point—getting up steam! (Rom. 12: 11).

Suggestions. There is not in all eternity another day but to-day in which to perform the duties of to-day.

Christian Endeavor that is not good for Monday is not good for Sunday. Duty is a great word, but chiefly because it leads to a greater word, to Love.

Are you looking forward to future faithfulness? Your only hope and guarantee of faithfulness is your faithfulness to-day.

Illustrations. Think of each day as a present, handed you, boxed and wrapped in cloth of gold, by the Lord of Time Himself.

The chain that holds your anchor fast is made of separate links, each forged a separate day. There is no other way for the tree to be beautiful than for each leaf to be beautiful. So with your tree of life.

No mountain is made of a single piece, but of countless tiny grains. So is a heroic life made of small heroic deeds.

To Think About. Is my ambition for large things spilling the little things? Do I consider all days important? Am I faithful to my smallest tasks?

## DO SPIDERS SLEEP?

The question, "Do spiders sleep at night?" is not easy to answer. I have made a careful observation of the sleep of ants, and that could readily be done by watching colonies in their artificial formicaries. It is almost impossible to deal with spiders in the same way. I would answer, however, in general terms, that spiders sleep, as all animals do, and doubtless parts of the night are spent in slumber. Many species, however, prey on the night-flying insects, and so must be awake in order to catch their prey. If you will watch the porch or outbuildings of your home on a summer evening you will be likely to see an orb-weaver spider drop slowly down on a single thread in the gathering dusk of the evening. From this beginning a round web will soon be spun, and either hanging at the centre thereof, or in a little nest above and at one side will be the architect, with forefoot clasping what we call the "trap line," and waiting for some night-flying insect to strike the snare. In this position spiders will sometimes wait for hours, and it is just possible that they may then take a little nap. They might easily do that and yet not lose their game, for the agitation of the web would rouse the sleeper, and then it would run down the trap line and secure its prey. Some species of spiders do the chief part of their hunting at night, and there are some who chiefly hunt during the day, but as a rule these industrious animals work both day and night.—From Nature and Science, in St. Nicholas.

## THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMPLEMENTS FOR OCT. 20 BY THE REV. I. W. HENDERSON.

Subject: The Capture of Jericho, Josh. 6: 8-20—Golden Text, Heb. 11: 30—Memory Verse, 20—Commentary.

Jericho was a walled city of entrenched power. Israel was an unarmed host. The contest appeared to be unequal. But the inequality was merely apparent. As it turned out, faith without armament was mightiest.

It must have seemed silly to those who sat on the wall in fancied security and laughed, to see such an army march in silence around Jericho twelve times in seven days and be dumb for more. The besieged were doubtless as curious about the outcome as were they who marched with silent faith in and at the word of God. Israel had learned perseverance through privation and confidence through experience. The citizens of Jericho were to learn that the apparent unwisdom of God in the secret of the salvation of men. The silence of Israel was destined to be the lull before the storm.

The victory at Jericho is a lesson in the fruits of faithful obedience and in demonstration of the effectiveness of the unusual and apparently foolish methods God uses to force the fulfillment of His purposes.

The falling walls of Jericho sounded the praises of faithful human obedience and divine decrees. It may have seemed unwise to Israel to do as they did, but they put their trust in God. The tactics were as unorthodox as they were original. The whole proceeding was odd. To the men on the wall it must have been strikingly fantastic. The demonstration of the effectiveness of military procedure that was given in the code. After six trials marching brought no results. It was, on the surface, thoroughly absurd. What- ever the opinions of the Israelites may have been, they obeyed the word of Jehovah who had said, "I will do as they did, but they put their trust in God. The tactics were as unorthodox as they were original. The whole proceeding was odd. To the men on the wall it must have been strikingly fantastic. The demonstration of the effectiveness of military procedure that was given in the code. After six trials marching brought no results. It was, on the surface, thoroughly absurd. 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