

Grand Trunk Railway TIME-TABLE

Trains leave Durham at 7.05 a.m., and 3.45 p.m. Trains arrive at Durham at 11.20 a.m., 2.30 p.m., and 8.45 p.m. EVERY DAY EXCEPT SUNDAY

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SUNDAY SCHOOL

Lesson III.—First Quarter, For Jan. 16, 1916.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Text of the Lesson, Acts ii, 22-41. Memory Verses, 33, 39—Golden Text, Acts ii, 21—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

This is the first recorded sermon of a mere man filled with the Spirit, and if all sermons were molded on the same pattern the Holy Spirit could accomplish much more than He is by an ordinary sermon permitted to do, for in this sermon by Peter the Word of God is the substance of the discourse.

Peter quoted from Joel ii, 28-32, to show that this manifestation of the Spirit was a fulfillment of that prediction, and not any wild ravings of drunken men. The complete fulfillment of Joel's words will be at the second coming of Christ to judge the nations and open the eyes of Israel (Joel iii, 1, 2).

God had told David that He would establish his throne and his kingdom forever in one of his descendants, and our lesson says that David knew that God meant not Solomon, but the Messiah, the Christ (II Sam. vii, 12-19; Acts ii, 30), risen from the dead and immortal. The sufferings of Christ are most vividly portrayed in Isa. liii, but His resurrection is seen there also in verse 10, for one who dies can prolong his days only by rising from the dead.

Notice in this discourse Peter's references to the resurrection of Christ in verses 24, 30, 32, 36—that by the resurrection God made that same Jesus whom they had crucified both Lord and Christ and that He had raised up Christ to sit on the throne of David. In I Pet. i, 21, we read that God raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory. We seem to come nearest to the Father's heart when we, too, give Him glory or seek in all things to glorify Him (I Pet. iv, 11).

When the prophet Micah predicted His birth in Bethlehem he spoke of Him as "ruler in Israel" (Mic. v, 2), and in the fullness of time He will surely be King of the Jews on the throne of David, but He will also be the King of kings and Lord of lords, King over all the earth (Luke i, 32, 33; Rev. xvii, 14; xix, 16; Zech. ix, 9).

Being rejected (the Jews insisted on crucifying Him, saying, "We have no king but Caesar"—John xix, 14, 15), He ascended, and the heaven must receive Him until the times of restoration of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began (Acts iii, 21). The congregation to whom Peter delivered this discourse were all Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven (verse 5), and when they saw from their own Scripture, as unfolded to them by the Spirit through Peter, that their Messiah was to die and rise from the dead and thus become an immortal man, and that what had been done by their rulers in their blindness was also foreseen and recorded, the Spirit convinced them of their sin, and they said to Peter and the rest, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Verse 37).

Peter urged them to repent and be baptized and receive remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. This they gladly did, and that day about 3,000 Jews were added to the number of the saved in Christ (verses 38-41). This is one fulfillment of the words of the Lord Jesus, "Greater works than these shall he do because I go unto the Father" (John xiv, 12). We must not think that if we are Spirit filled we shall always see souls saved, for Stephen was filled with the Spirit and so spoke that he received stones enough to kill him (vi, 5, 10; vii, 55-60), but probably Saul never forgot it, and it may have been one of the links in the chain leading to his conversion. One who is Spirit filled will say as Paul did, "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death" (Phil. i, 20; Rom. xiv, 8).

Let us learn from verse 23 of our lesson that God's foreknowledge of what wicked people will do to His people does not lessen the guilt of the evildoers, nor in any way excuse them. Let us learn also that God permits evildoers and even the devil, to work out unintentionally His purposes, for He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him and restrains the reminder (Pa. lxxvi, 10). May we ever rejoice in the risen Living Christ, His finished work. His present ministry of intercession. His coming again and in all the glory of His Kingdom, continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, with gladness (42-47). By the same Spirit who dwelt in Jesus Christ we may be approved of God and have Him work in us such works that God shall be glorified in us (verse 22; II Tim. ii, 15).

Sinclair Inn

Story of a Christmas House Party

By SARAH BAXTER

It was Christmas eve. A young lady, plainly dressed, emerged from Sinclair station and called a cab.

"Take me to the Sinclair House," she said to the cabman.

There were two houses in the place, one the Sinclair Inn, the other the residence of Mrs. Sinclair, a rich and fashionable woman. The hotel had been named for the Sinclair family, who had for generations been the mainstay of the town.

Mrs. Sinclair was endeavoring to work out her theory for others, not herself. In her homestead in the village of Sinclair—everything was Sinclair in the place—her servants treated her with the utmost deference. It happened that when the lady who had just arrived at the station, Miss Mildred Abercrombie, was being driven to the Sinclair House Mrs. Sinclair was entertaining a Christmas house party. The cabman, who was very stupid and a recent comer to the place, got the two houses mixed in his mind and drove Miss Abercrombie to the private house.

Now, it happened that several of the guests were sitting in the wainscoted hall before a huge fireplace, on the hearth of which blazed the Yule log. Naturally they were merry, and their principal amusement was cracking jokes at one another. When therefore Miss Abercrombie entered and asked if the proprietor were in, one of the young men, Mr. Jack Edwards, arose and said politely:

"I am the clerk. Would you like a room?"

"Yes; I would like a room for the holidays."

The party sitting before the fireplace repressed smiles or hid them while Mr. Edwards took the lady's handbag and other light articles, set them in a corner, handed her a chair and said:

"Mrs. Sinclair runs this house. I will see her, and a maid will come and show you to your room."

With this he vanished and reported to the hostess that a pretty girl had arrived who had mistaken the house for a hotel and it would be jolly good fun to permit her to remain for awhile in ignorance. Mrs. Sinclair, who felt the responsibilities of an entertainer, seized upon the idea with alacrity, called a maid and, going to the new arrival, welcomed her and sent her immediately to a room. The young lady having gone upstairs, the hostess charged her guests to keep the secret from the new arrival, each one striving to carry out the joke.

An hour later, when the guests were dressing for dinner, Miss Abercrombie went downstairs to the hall or room used for lounging, where she found the hostess, whose manner was so friendly that she at once won her guest's confidence.

"I have come away from the city," said Miss Abercrombie, "to escape Christmas—not that I would not gladly welcome the holidays, but during the past few years I have lost all who might make them enjoyable for me. I felt this year that I could not remain at home, and, hearing of your family inn that it was comfortable and homelike, I concluded to pass the holidays here."

"I can understand your feelings perfectly," replied the hostess, "and we will endeavor to alleviate your loneliness so far as possible. My guests are all en rapport and will be happy to receive you into the circle."

"I have heard of a lady of your name in the city who is endeavoring to solve the servant problem."

Mrs. Sinclair pricked her ears. An idea came and developed into a purpose.

"That Mrs. Sinclair is a connection of mine and I am a convert to her theory. I have not dared, however, to put it in practice all at once, but am experimenting by treating certain of my assistants, I call them—as my equals. My clerk, of course, is superior to a servant, and in his case I have no trouble. I have one maid who, being more refined than the others, is treated as one of us. My butler is treated likewise. Then, too, several of my lady guests, having been captivated by the new idea, are putting their maids on the same footing with themselves."

"That's very nice," replied Miss Abercrombie. "I have always pitied a poor girl in a family keeping but one maid—the lonely life she is forced to lead. I assure you that while a guest in your house I will do all in my power to carry out your benevolent plan."

Mrs. Sinclair excused herself and hastened upstairs to coach her guests before they should come down to dinner that their dupe had been prepared to consider some of them servants. Bob Elliot, an inveterate joker, was appointed to play butler, the regular butler lending Bob a livery. Miss Sterling, a success in private theatricals, was uniformed as chief maid for the inn, and several other girls were to play ladies' maids. All preliminaries

having been attended to, the guests one by one went down to dinner.

At one end of the table sat Mrs. Sinclair, at the other Bob Elliot in butler's livery. Next to Elliot Miss Abercrombie was given a seat. There were one other man in livery and three girls in the black dresses and white caps and aprons of maids, the ladies' maids sitting next their mistresses and ministering to their table wants.

Bob Elliot was a very attractive young man. Moreover, he had a sympathetic way with him, and after pretending for awhile to have some doubts as to Miss Abercrombie's treatment of a butler as an equal and finding her complaisant he became a charming dinner companion. He and Miss Abercrombie were soon noticed by the rest of the company to be oblivious to every one except themselves.

Mr. Elliot, a college postgraduate, had been considered not only a good fellow at the university, but very bright. He now occupied an assistant professorship at his alma mater. When the attraction between him and Miss Abercrombie became noticeable the other guests looked at one another meaningly.

"What if there should be a match?" whispered one.

"If his mother were here she would take him away," said another. "She thinks that a poor professor should marry some money. This girl, judging from her clothes, is as poor as he."

Put a number of young persons of opposite sex under the same roof with nothing to do but make merry and flirt, and those who are naturally assimilative will very soon assimilate. Professor Elliot, alias Robert the butler, soon became absorbed in Miss Abercrombie, and vice versa.

The second day after her arrival Miss Abercrombie went to the hostess, confessed that she was a seamstress and, since the Sinclair Inn was altogether too expensive for her, said she must leave at once, whereupon Mrs. Sinclair told her she might pay what she could afford. This somewhat dampened the enthusiasm of the house party, for a seamstress was persona non grata to most of the men and all the women.

From this time on all except Elliot gave their attention largely to other matters. He, despite the fact that Miss Abercrombie had turned out a seamstress, seemed unable to withdraw his attentions from her.

The guests were invited for two weeks. After the first week they tired of keeping up the sham that had been devised and would have abandoned it but for the hostess, who would not consent. Despite her efforts to prevent, most of them turned a cold shoulder to Miss Abercrombie. Professor Elliot's position was complicated. He was playing a part humbler than Miss Abercrombie's position. How could he abandon it and become his real self? What he had entered upon as a joke, when revealed, would likely not be considered such by the girl, but offensive. Supposing he confessed his true character, he did not care to marry a seamstress, and she would consider that he had won her dishonorably.

A young person of either sex when once thoroughly in love is likely to throw prudence to the winds. Elliot forgot his mother's plans for him—the fact that as a college professor he should marry a woman of some means; that a seamstress would likely have a lot of relatives that would not at all accord with the families of his associate professors. One evening, sitting alone in the gloaming with Mildred Abercrombie, while "the fitful freight danced upon the wall," he forgot himself so far as to make love to her, and that, of course, with an honorable man led to a confession of who and what he was and a proposition of marriage.

Miss Abercrombie did not reproach him for having won her as an inferior when he was a superior. After a little thought she told him that she could not think of marrying one so far above her. He argued that she was refined and he would never be ashamed of her, but she gave no evidence that he had overcome her scruples.

When the party broke up it was regretted that Miss Abercrombie had turned out so low in the social scale, for otherwise the farce that had been played might have had a merry ending. As it was, few of the party took the trouble to bid her goodby. She gave Elliot the privilege of calling once at her humble home, giving him her address.

Soon after his return to his home he took a train for the city in which Miss Abercrombie lived and started for the address she had given him. The street was eminently respectable, and he thought there must be some mistake. When he reached the house he found it palatial. Thinking Miss Abercrombie had given him the address of a family for whom she was sewing, he paused, then went up to the door and rang the bell. A butler showed him into a drawing room and went away to announce the visitor.

Presently there was a footstep on the main staircase, and Miss Abercrombie entered the room. Her apparel was in accord with her present position, and he knew that she was a lady.

"Did you suppose," she asked, smiling, "that one who had been always used to a butler would mistake you for one?"

"What a fool I was to listen to the story that you were a seamstress! I should have known better."

"You played your part well."

"You played yours to perfection. You should be on the stage."

Then began a renewal of the courtship. Elliot's mother was well pleased with his marriage, for his wife brought him a fortune. As for the guests at the Sinclair Inn, they were surprised and ashamed, but young Mrs. Elliot and Mrs. Sinclair became fast friends.

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Witness, A. S. Signed, W. J.