

The Need of the Temperance Lesson in the Sunday School.

One of the greatest evils of the age is intemperance. It would be impossible to enumerate the various forms in which it appears—exaggeration and gossip are intemperance of speech, ceaseless work without proper exercise is intemperance in labor, and there are many other examples that might be quoted, but it is not to any of these forms that this paper refers—it is to the intemperance caused by the use of intoxicating drinks. The question may occur to some, "How is this of interest to the Sunday Schools?" The answer is that every temptation that the Sunday School scholar may meet in life is of vital interest to the Sunday School.

The little child, innocent of wrong and of all wrong doing comes to the Sunday School to be taught. These little ones, fresh from the hands of God, are yet unclaimed by vice and are more impressionable now than they ever will be again. It is now when they are open to impressions both good and evil that the good influences should predominate. Some children come from homes where temperance is not regarded as a virtue, or at least if a virtue, as one that is unattainable. If these children hear nothing in favor of temperance in the Sunday Schools it is not probable that they will hear it in their homes. The temperance lesson is needed also because of the child's influence in the home. Home has been defined as a place where the great are small and the small are great, and certainly the influence of the child is great in the home. Many parents addicted to the use of liquor have been led to reform by the simple words of a child in the home. The most obdurate heart is touched most easily by the innocent questioning of a little one. Christ's words come to us with new beauty and power. "A little child shall lead them," and if it is His will that the little ones in our class be the means of leading parents who have proved the degrading effect of liquor to reform, lead them even to recognize the power of Christ, our Saviour, then the responsibility of the teacher is a great one.

And so the temperance lesson is needed if we consider the effect upon only those who are not taught temperance in their homes. But this is not all. All the children need it, even those whose parents are the strongest prohibitionists. They are now in the formative period of life and it cannot be too strongly emphasized that they should be taught to recognize that one of the greatest, if not the greatest foe, to the advancement of Christ's kingdom is found in the wine cup. The physical, moral, and intellectual life of man are threatened to such an extent that the child should be made to realize the sad consequences if he should yield to the temptation that will certainly come to him sometime in life.

Not only is the effect upon the scholars to be considered, but it must be remembered that the teaching does not stop there. These scholars are the centres of influence, and as they grow their influence grows. The boys and girls in our Sunday Schools today will in a few years be the leaders of thought of our or other communities. The future lawyers, doctors, merchants and statesmen are sitting in our Sunday School classes every week asking their childish questions, and from our answers form opinions that will probably continue with them through life. They should be made to feel just how great their influence will be and that they will have to be strong because of

"The wrong that needs resistance
For the right that needs assistance
And the good that they may do."

And if ever the cause of temperance needed to be instilled in the hearts of the children it is today, temperance in respect not only to drink, but the cigarette habit that so many boys are acquiring. The degrading effect (of this cigarette habit, physically and morally) should be carefully explained to them. In fact when it is remembered how great the tendency is now for boys to come under the influence of this evil, and that in many cases this is but the initial step to later degradations it seems that a lesson once in three months is inadequate to meet the demands of the present condition. And though this may be digressing a little from the subject under consideration, I should like to mention that in connection with every Sunday School there ought to be a temperance organization of some kind similar to the Band of Hope. Four lessons a year are not sufficient to keep alive the temperance sentiment or to create enthusiasm among the children. The duty devolves upon each one of us not only as members of the classes and as teachers in the Sunday Schools but as members of a Christian community to stand firmly for temperance. Those who have come under the evil influence of this terrible curse would, if asked their opinion, be the most earnest advocates of temperance. If the older ones in the homes could only realize how their words and actions are moulding the characters of the children who consciously and unconsciously imitate them they would be careful to have their own lives stand for all that is highest, truest and noblest in life. Is it not unfair to expect the Sunday School teacher to accomplish in one brief half-hour once a week the adoption of right principles and high ideals if the parents and other brothers and sisters in the home do not strive

during the seven days of the week to aid in every way the teaching of morality and spirituality? It may not be possible to attend the Sunday School, but it is possible to so live that our lives will help to promote the purest and highest life possible. If we do this our influence will be for the cause of temperance and the Sunday School and temperance workers will have our earnest support and co-operation.

"It pays to make a worthy cause
By helping it, our own;
To give the current of our lives
A true and noble tone.
It pays to comfort heavy hearts,
Oppressed with dull despair,
And leave in sorrow-darkened lives
One gleam of brightness there.

It pays to give a helping hand
To eager, earnest youth;
To note, with all their waywardness,
Their courage and their truth;
To strive with sympathy and love
Their confidence to win.
It pays to open wide the heart
And let the sunshine in."

And so if we wish to advance Christ's kingdom here on earth we must work to keep the evils of smoking, drinking, yes and swearing from entering into the lives of those who are now pure from them.

Bessie Marguerite McMillan, Acadia '02.

Lovable Christians.

By Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

There is no line of eulogy in the Bible that is more to be coveted than this single line, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." The original possessor of this precious encomium was John the evangelist, and the inspired writer of five wondrous books of Holy Scripture. There is a very false conception of him in many minds, as if he were a mild, effeminate person, lacking in all the robust qualities of an athletic manhood. On the contrary, he was peculiarly bold and energetic and outspoken—one of two "sons of thunder." He was a man of flaming zeal for his Master's glory, and of red hot hatred for everything false and wicked. And yet he was the author of those three marvelous love letters which have the elusive sweetness of the pressed honeycomb. There seems to have been a peculiar inner sympathy between Jesus Christ and this favorite disciple; he penetrated more fully into his Master's mission, understood more deeply his Master's character, and partook more of his Master's spirit than any other of the twelve. He was the planet that rode nearest to the sun. That "leaning on the breast of Jesus" at the paschal supper had a meaning in it; it meant that John's heart drew so strongly to Christ's heart, that their outward embrace was as natural as the kiss of a husband and a wife.

John might have sat for that portrait which Paul afterwards painted when he described the Christian character as possessing "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report." This word "lovely" does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament; it signifies what is dear to any one, and the phrase "things of good report" signifies that which wins admiration and approval. We might paraphrase the expression, and render it—"be lovable; so give us to win converts to your Master." Every Christian is, or ought to be, a representative of Jesus Christ before the world. He has been well styled "the world's Bible," and is about the only Bible that thousands ever look at. It should be the aim of every follower of Christ to be a living epistle, not only legible but attractive to all who study him. Is this always so? Is the religion of every good man and good woman truly lovable? We fear not. Some men's piety has quite too much of the flavor of the "old Adam" still lingering about it. Others sour their religion with the acidity of censoriousness, and their conversation sets everyone's teeth on edge. After an hour's talk with them you find yourself almost insensibly prejudiced against some of the best people of your acquaintance. A fly has been dropped by these censorious dyspeptics into every pot of fragrant ointment, and a smirch has been left by their uncharitable tongues on the fairest characters. There is quite too much lemon and too little sugar in the composition of such people to make them agreeable to anybody. Only half-converted themselves, they convert no one else.

Somewhat akin to these is a class of knotty and crabbed Christians whom nobody respects, and almost nobody loves. In my early ministry I had a most conscientious and godly minded officer in my church, who rigidly practiced whatsoever things were true and whatsoever things were just and whatsoever things were honorable. He was honest to a farthing and devout to the very core. I never knew him to do a wrong deed, and I scarcely ever knew him to do a pleasant one. There was a deal of good, solid and most excellent meat in him, but no one liked to prick his fingers in coming at it. The rugged old chestnut burr Christian might have been a great power in the church; but even the children in the street were afraid to speak to him; and so he went sturdily on his way to heaven, praying and working and growling as he went, reminding me constantly of

his famous countryman, Thomas Carlyle. If there had been a few drops of the Epistle of St. John distilled into him he would have made a grand specimen of a Christian, and probably he has become sweeter and mellowed by this time in the warm atmosphere of heaven. That good man did more than make a mistake; he committed a sin by destroying a large part of his influence for winning others to Christ. As a soldier has no right to wet his powder or to hunt his sword when he goes into battle, so no Christian has a right to make his religion offensive when he might make it attractive. His personal influence is a trust and a talent which he is bound to use for his Master. "He is wise that winneth souls," and no one of us is likely to win anybody until we have won their affections. Influence is never to be gained by compromising with other people's sins, or conniving at their wrongdoings; trimmers and time-servers are only repaid with contempt. The price of permanent love is fidelity to the right and an unselfish aim to do good to others.

A lovable Christian, therefore, is one who hits the golden mean between easy, good-natured laxity on the one hand, and stern or uncharitable moroseness on the other. He is sound and yet sweet. He is all the sweeter for living much in the sunshine of Christ's countenance. He never incurs suspicion or contempt by compromising with sinful prejudices, nor does he repel people by doing a righteous act in a churlish or bigotted fashion. The blessed Jesus is our model here as in everything else.

The Country Parson.

The country parson is a hardworked man, not by reason of claims made upon him, but because of the fire of faith and love burning within him. A country parish is not easy to be reached. People are widely scattered and dwell in all sorts of inaccessible corners, some at Buntaccoo over yonder on the mountain side, some at Plutarch up among the woods, some at Springtown across the river and that wide stretch of meadow, always muddy and sometimes overflowed. If they cannot come to the village church, and they often think they cannot, the minister can go to them and he does. Accordingly, he arranges a local circuit of Sunday afternoon services, and one Sunday with his old horse he jogs out to the schoolhouse in the northeast part of the town and holds a service, preaching to a score as earnestly as if they were five hundred. The next Sunday he does the same by the southeast corner of the town; and so Sunday by Sunday he works his way around until he has boxed the compass of the needs of the unchurched, and then begins again. Do you think it wearisome work and work without reward? Not at all. He is paid abundantly, though not in the current coin of the realm, for he gets little of that. His pay comes in what is more enduring—in the love and appreciation of his townsmen, in the immortal stamp put on their souls by his deeds of devotion, in his own growth in character and the peace of mind that comes to him in the service, and in the fact that when at last he lies down worn out, and the death pallor steals over him, his face lights up with an ecstatic smile because he sees God.—The Christian Work.

He who would work for God must walk with God. We must share His thoughts and wishes, be in line with His purposes, and in submission to His will! Passion for souls is a sine qua non to God's fellow-workers. If we are God's fellow-workers, it will seem like blasphemy to introduce other than the best for His service. C. H. Spurgeon had said, "The best of the best should be given to the best of the best." Our best was that which was most hearty. On the gravestone of a Macgregor was inscribed, "He did his best for the old name." So should we do. It behoved us to see well to our motives and to our methods. As to motives, there must be none of self. Ah, there was the rub. Self must die, yet it was the very last thing that self did.—T. Spurgeon.

There is a far better message for us today than any message of our seeing Jesus Christ. There is the great, splendid truth that our God is a God whose eyes are upon our lives. Who is looking over all the world and under whose gaze the ways of every one of us lie all open and exposed; and we can get no greater blessing than just to realize that our lives are to be lived forever more with the eyes of that glorious face looking down upon us, with the consciousness that every hour, and every day, and every night the eyes of our Father are guarding round about our ways.—Robert E. Speer.

Truth is a thing immortal and perpetual, and it gives to us a beauty that fades not away in time, nor does it take away the freedom of speech which proceeds from justice; but it gives to us the knowledge of what is just and lawful, separating from them the unjust and refuting them.—Epictetus.

Truth illuminates and gives joy; and it is by the bond of joy, not of pleasure, that men's spirits are indissolubly held.—Matthew Arnold.