

The Quiet Hour.

World's Temperance Sunday.

S. S. Lesson Isaiah 28:14 15. Nov. 27 1904.

GOLDEN TEXT—They have also erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way.—I Isa. 28: 7.

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Overcome with wine, v. 1. The true life for any of us on earth is a battle—he very sure of that. No impulse or appetite of our nature is sinful in itself. But, unless we are on guard, every one of them becomes an avenue open and easy for the enemy who seeks to win the citadel of our souls. Look at the man who stands erect, foursquare to every unlawful appeal to desire and passion. Then turn to another, young, handsome, well-dressed, with bright prospects, selling his very manhood for the fleeting pleasure that sparkles in the wine-cup. Oh, better to fight, till we drop in our tracks, than yield in the very least degree.

Tempest of hail. . . destroying storm. . . flood v. 2. We have all seen, some time or other a garden gay in its beauty, then the slow gathering of black clouds in the sky, and while a solemn stillness filled all the air and nature seemed hushed, waiting the storm, the flowers still flaunted their frail loveliness. Then the blast breaks forth from the storm-cloud, the hail, keen and cold, beats down on the garden, and, when it has passed we look, and lo, all the loveliness is destroyed and the flowers are crushed. This is the picture drawn by God's own hand of the ruin that sooner or later follows on the breaking of His laws. Trifle with those laws—what folly is greater?

The Lord of hosts. . . a crown of glory, v. 5. Jerusalem—with what intensity the Jew loved the centre of his national and religious life. And in the sacred city the chief glory was the temple. But this was only a symbol; the reality was the presence of God. His chosen dwelling place is "the upright heart and pure." Give Him His throne there at the centre of the life, and at its circumference, He will make Himself a wall of fire—a defence that no foe can break through.

Whom shall he teach knowledge? v. 9. We have all come across people who "know it all." There is no ignorance more hopeless than theirs. The experience gathered from the past—they heed it not. The wise counsel of age—they will have none of it. Well, they must just be allowed to go their own way. Some day they will be brought up with a short turn. The hard, strong bit of suffering will check them. And it will come. That is the way the world is made. Many a tough pull we shall save ourselves, by listening in time to wise and friendly warnings.

Full . . . of filthiness, v. 8. Was it not the Spartans who showed their boys a drunken man, to warn them against the use of strong drink? Here is a power that is constantly destroying the fairest and noblest work of God. Does it not deserve to be hated by us with a holy, burning, undying hatred?

Precept . . . upon precept . . . line upon line, v. 10. Like a sweet kernel encased in a rough shell, a great truth is wrapped up in this mocking answer. Impressions are deepened by repetition. For example, it is by keeping ourselves under the influence of God's word, that our characters are moulded into agreement with its teaching. To change the figure, as the sun bleaches the

linen into snowy whiteness, so does divine truth, continually studied, purify our lives.

The Simple Life.

Public interest concentrates itself in phrases. Just now we are hearing much about life, "simple," "strenuous" and "indifferent." So far there has been nothing suggested which is really new. Simplicity of living is an old virtue. Israel had it. He was a "plain man dwelling in tents." No more concise biography was ever written. Volumes could have added nothing more.

The apostle of a simple life is too ancient a term for modern application. It belongs to the ages. But the man forceful enough to arrest his generation in its feverish haste does a great thing. He is a benefactor to whom we are all indebted. Christianity was once simplicity. All these ecclesiastical fuss, feathers and frills are the fungus growth of time.

The other day the good people of Boston had a specular exhibition of what modern Christianity has become. It was a procession of ecclesiastics decorated like so many peacocks on dress parade. There was a flutter of robes, capes and hoods; a display of crosses, crucifixes and crosiers. At the head of the line was a Carpenter. A man with a saw, prematurely old and bent. He was far in advance of the rest, so far that but few could see him. What a burlesque upon Christianity. And yet, the masses were interested only in the procession. The Carpenter walked unobserved and alone. Unfortunately, the spirit of that exhibition permeates all our churches. There is a departure from the simplicity of Jesus that every thoughtful Christian must regret.

The modern church is a protest against Christianity. No congregation was ever wealthy enough to justify extravagance, and extravagance is the plan upon which most churches are built. Christianity is a thing of the heart, not a plan of architecture. Noah's ark had no steeple. It was built for service and not for exhibition. The Patriarch had no Building Committees to consult but himself. He did a splendid work, and we are only sorry that he ever died. As a church builder he would have been invaluable. This same lack of simplicity is characteristic of educational institutions and homes of charity. A college building costing twenty thousand dollars answers every purpose of one costing fifty thousand. The difference might serve as a productive endowment. But the passion for the spectacular must be gratified, with the result that the wealthiest institutions are practically poor. Beneficent Homes are blighted by the same evil. They are sure to be built uncomfortably fine, and when completed there is nothing left for their support. Instead of helping others they themselves must be helped. Silver plate in abundance, but no bread.

There is also a home life which is the real source of all living. Here it is that simplicity should reign, but the contrary is too often true. Every home should be comfortable, and beyond this all is vanity and vexation of spirit. A friend recently said to us that he had no home. He had a house and lawns, but no home. We understood perfectly well what he meant. He was a man of simple tastes, but Simpli-

city and he had parted company. We would not suggest bare walls and desolate surroundings. Refinement draws to itself the congenial and harmonious, but refinement is an angel of unbounded resources. It never estimates the value of an article by what it costs. One of the most charitable men that we know but the other day gave us the secret of his ability to help others. "My income," he said, "is twice what it was a few years ago, and my expenses have not increased in proportion." He lives a simple life, and finds happiness in the good he may do. Ostentation is always rivalry. One wishes to keep pace with his associates, hence the mad rush of extravagant living. But happiness is not a commodity. Appearances fail to move it. The simple life is the one lived by the Christ. He owned the world, and yet was content to live within his own limited circle. His life is the only true one. The lesson is difficult and few there be who learn it.—The Philadelphia Westminister.

FOR DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

Security.

BY BENNIE BRAE, OTTAWA

Kept by God, our Heavenly Father,
Overshadowed by His love,
Storms and clouds around may gather,
God sits on His throne above,
And His mighty boundless power
Keeps and guards us every hour

Everlasting life is given
Each believing, trusting one.
We shall reach our home in heaven
Kept by Jesus, God's dear son.
Joint heirs with Christ complete we stand,
And none shall pluck us from His hand.

Better trials may attend us
Enemies rise like a flood,
Still trust on, He will defend us
By the spirit of our God
'Gainst foes a standard He will raise,
Blessed Lord, we give Thee praise.

Kept by Father, Son and Spirit,
None can hurt us; naught alarm,
Peace and safety we inherit,
Sure defence from every harm.
Bound by bands which none can sever
Hallelujah, safe forever.

A Prayer For Sorrowing Ones.

In thy wisdom, whose ways are past finding out, O Father in heaven, thou hast appointed our dear ones unto tears. Thou hast called them into sorrow's Gethsemane, where great loneliness and anguish wring their hearts. Grant, Father, that they may meet Jesus there. This is all that we can pray. Our blundering lips cannot comfort them and our blind eyes cannot discern the purpose of thy providence. But, O, Father of love, draw these sorrowing ones close to thyself in the person of the sympathetic Saviour. Through their tears may they see Jesus. There is no comfort but in thee, O God triune, may all who weep find thee. Be thou companionship for their loneliness, light for their perplexity, strength for their weakness, and courage for their new life of bereavement. Show them that all thy plans for thy children include two worlds. Reveal unto them them the tenderness and humaneness of thy sympathy; comfort them as one whom a mother comforteth. This we ask in the name of the Saviour who sorrowed and wept. Amen.

When Mohammedans see one of their number drunk, they are in the habit of saying, "He has become a Christian."