

THE ROOTS OF A GREAT AND GODLY LIFE.

BY THEODORE L. CUTLER, D.D.

An eminent banker fell into no exaggeration when he said to a representative of the press: "The most thoroughly useful man New York has known for a quarter of a century was William E. Dodge." Mr. Dodge was happy in his lineage and birthplace. From the days of Jonathan Edwards, little Connecticut has given more leaders of religious thought and activity to the nation than any other commonwealth. The boy's father was a man of culture; but the boy himself had no educational advantages beyond those of the average Yankee common school, and at fifteen he was the errand-running lad in a Pearl Street dry-goods store. He swept the floors and took down the shutters every morning; but the best outfit which the homespun lad brought into the great city was the grace of God in his heart. At the early age of twelve he was thoroughly converted to the Lord Jesus Christ, and he was fairly "rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith." While many persons who have been regenerated late in life have yielded some good fruit, as from a graft set into an old tree, yet it holds true that the most effective Christians have grown up in Christ from early childhood. The roots of character were not poisoned by long contact with a bad soil. Here lies the inspiring argument for Sabbath-schools, for godly home-training, and for more simple and direct preaching to children from the pulpit. There is a steady decrease of conversions among the adult members of most of our congregations. Fully four-fifths of all the accessions to the churches now are from persons who have not yet reached twenty-one.

Young Dodge was a puritan, eschewing all sensual amusements and entertainments of even questionable character. He soon learned to say "No," and never outgrew the use of that most decisive monosyllable. The world knew him most widely for his magnificent gifts of money to innumerable objects; but, after thirty years of intimate intercourse with him, I was never half so much impressed with his generosity as by his intense, immovable conscientiousness. So emotional in his temperament that he cried like a child under Gough's stories or Sarkey's songs, yet the central trunk of his religion was conscience. The word "ought" always gave the casting vote.

During the war General Dix and his staff gave Mr. Dodge a complimentary dinner at Fortress Monroe. The General said to his brother officers: "Gentlemen, you know our friend is a water-drinker." And forthwith every wineglass was turned upside down, as a silent tribute to the conscience of their guest. When the Union League Club decided to keep a wine-cellar to supply their members he wrote to them: "I cannot consistently be connected with any association who derive their support in any part from the sale of intoxicating drinks. I present my resignation as a member." He was one of the organizers, builders and active directors of a celebrated railway. The proposal was made to drive their trains through the Lord's day. Mr. Dodge firmly said to his fellow directors: "Then, gentlemen, put a flag on every locomotive and inscribe on it 'We break God's law for a dividend'; but, as for me, I go out." He did go out, and the Sabbath-breaking road went into bankruptcy within three years.

Presiding at public meetings or sitting in boards of Christian benevolence are the utmost extent of many excellent men's labors; but Mr. Dodge was taught by that master-workman Harlan Page, fifty years ago, that the true method of winning souls to Christ is by close personal appeal. When young Mr. Dodge came into Harlan Page's Sunday-school and asked for a class, Page said to him: "Yonder is a desk and a bench. Go out and find a class for yourself." That hint lasted for a lifetime. During the great revival of 1858, Mr. Dodge was entering in his personal labors in enquiry meetings and in his visits to individuals in their homes; and many were the rich and the refined, on whose Wilton carpets my beloved friend knelt down and, beside them, prayed fervently for the converting power of God. Glorious man! I never shall forget the enthusiasm with which he narrated to me the individual cases of conversion that had followed his labors among the poor coal-miners and iron-workers in Northern Pennsylvania. Love of Jesus and love of souls were the master passion of his being. What a crown

of un fading brilliancy awaited him when, from the arms of the devoted wife of fifty years, he went up to the arms of his Redeemer!

A tree of such broad-limbed beneficence required not only strong and fertile soil, but perpetual watering. Most happily did my friend answer to that description in Holy Writ: "He shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out its roots by the rivers; he shall not be troubled in the years of drought, neither shall he cease from yielding fruit." There was a perennial verdure in Mr. Dodge's piety and an unceasing yield of spiritual fruits, because his roots were moistened by communion with God. His earliest morning hour he set apart for his Bible and his private devotions. And, if he came down among his business associates with his face shining with cheerfulness and sunny kindness, it was because he had been on the mount with his Master. No fountain in the public park can rise higher, steadily, than its spring-head; no man can steadily maintain a pure, forestal life before his fellow-men unless his inner life is hid with Christ in God.—*N. Y. Independent.*

HOW CLAUDE CONQUERED.

He was such a bright, pretty boy, but he had such a quick temper; it just ruled him with a rod of iron. One day he came to his mother in a great distress of mind.

"O mother, what shall I do! I am just ashamed of myself."

"Have you ever prayed over it, my son?"

"Why, mother, I didn't suppose there was any use in taking such little things to God."

"He takes just as much notice of 'little things,' as you call them as of greater affairs."

"Please tell me how to take my tempers to him, mother. I'll just do anything to get rid of them."

"Every time you find yourself getting angry, stop and ask God to help you conquer."

"What shall I say when I ask him, mother?"

"Say, my child! Why, just the simplest words you can use. Speak just as you would when asking your earthly father for help."

"Yes, mother; but that seems so different, you know. I am not the least bit afraid of papa."

"Why should you be afraid of your Heavenly Father? He has ever been most kind and good to you, giving you so many blessings and mercies."

"But I cannot see him as I can papa."

"No, but you can trust him, when you remember that he gave his only Son to save your soul."

"Yes, mother, so I can; but he seems so far away when I try to pray."

"But not too far away to hear the faintest whisper his children may utter. Try him, my dear child."

"I will, mother, the first time I find my temper getting the better of me."

And he did not have to wait long. During school hours that very afternoon one of his schoolmates provoked him, and the quick retort flew to his lips; but remembering his mother's words, he said softly to himself, "Help me to keep still, I pray Thee, and not say anything hateful."

God heard the little prayer, and helped Claude to keep still, greatly to his companion's astonishment, for Claude's "tempers" were the talk of the school. Of course this success in mastering his temper pleased and encouraged Claude very much indeed. But because of his victory gained so easily, he was not so careful next time, and the consequence was, he failed in controlling his temper, and all because he did not lift his soul in prayer immediately upon finding his temper getting the better of him.

Claude threw himself at his mother's feet upon his return from school, and sobbed as if his heart would break.

"It's no use trying," he cried, "I thought I never would get angry again, and yet this very morning I slapped Willie Brown real hard, so that he cried, because he laughed when I dropped my slate-pencil and broke it."

"Shall I tell you how to impress this failure on your mind so that you will think better next time?"

"Yes, please."

"Pick out from among your playthings something pretty, and take it to Willie to-

morrow morning. I think you will remember next time to ask God to help you keep your temper."

So Claude took a present to Willie next day, and found that his mother was right. Willie himself was astonished, and told each schoolmate the whole story. Boys are generous souls, and these boys were no exception to the general rule. They applauded Claude with much noisy demonstration, and this quite surprised him in turn, and made him determined to win their esteem, even as he had their scorn in the past.—*Ruth Argle in The Child's Paper.*

BOYS' AND GIRLS' TEMPERANCE TEXT-BOOK.

BY H. L. READE.

(National Temperance Society, New York.)

PART II.

LESSON IV.—ALCOHOL IN BUSINESS—CONTINUED.

What department of business is among the next to railways in the number of persons employed and the wages paid?

Trade.

What is trade? Trade is the exchanging of one kind of goods for another kind, or the purchase or sale of goods for money.

Do merchants employ persons as agents, accountants, salesmen, or saleswomen who are known to be in the habitual use of alcoholic drinks?

Rarely, and then only from necessity.

Why not?

Because no person can be depended upon to do business wisely and well with alcohol in the brain.

What business ranks with trade in the number of persons employed?

Manufacture.

What is manufacture?

Manufacture is converting raw material of any kind into something suitable for use, either by the hand or machinery.

Do manufacturers employ persons as agents, superintendents, overseers, or in other responsible positions who are known to use, habitually, alcoholic drinks?

They do not, if others can be obtained.

Do persons who employ others to do common labor, choose those who use, habitually, alcoholic drinks, in preference to those of equal ability who never use them?

They do not. The preference is given to persons of equal ability who are sober.

Are there any among the commonest occupations into which the habitual use of alcoholic drinks is a help?

There are none. On the contrary, their use is always a hindrance, and generally prevents employment.

BIBLE WORDS ABOUT GIVING A PORTION OF OUR SUBSTANCE TO THE WORK OF THE LORD.

1. God claims a portion of our substance. And all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord.—*Lev. 27:30.*

2. Withholding this claim is to rob God. Will you rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? in tithes and offerings.—*Mal. 3:8.*

3. Therefore the claim should be attended to promptly. And as soon as the commandment came a-head, the children of Israel brought in abundance the first fruits of corn, wine and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithes of all the things brought they in abundantly.—*2 Chron. 31:5.*

4. Worldly prosperity promised to those who honor God with their substance. Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.—*Prov. 3:9, 10.*

5. It is accepted according to what a man hath. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.—*2 Cor. 8:12.*

6. It should be given willingly. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.—*2 Cor. 9:7.*

7. Does poverty or limited means excuse any one from giving to the Lord? They shall not appear before the Lord empty; every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee.—*Deut. 16:17, 18.*

8. Jacob's vow. Oraf that Thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee.—*Gen. 28:22.*

Will you act on these principles? If so, begin to-day.

"But now complete the doing also; that is there was the readiness to will, so there may be the completion also out of your ability. For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man hath, not according as he hath not."—*2 Cor. 8:11, 12.* New Version.

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From *Peloubat's Select Notes.*)July 1.—*Joshua 1: 1-9.*

ILLUSTRATIVE.

I. "Untold treasures in the Bible." The Bible is like nature. It is easy enough to gain from both the practical knowledge necessary to existence. No one need fail. But in both, deep study reveals untold treasures. There are mines of gold and silver beneath the surface; there are hidden powers in every force; there are new combinations, full of blessing and comfort. We have not gathered more than a few handfuls of Nature's boundless harvest. We have seen but a few waves from the vast ocean of blessings she has in store for us waiting for our earnest seeking, and hence our fitness to receive. So it is with the Bible. And meditation, day and night, with faithful obedience, are the "open sesame" to its treasures.—*P.*

II. "Success by obedience to God's word." The map of the world is the proof that even worldly success comes from obedience to the Gospel. Make a map like those in the census of the United States. Whatever nation is highest in culture, in civilization, in wealth and power, put in white. Darken the color of the nations as they have less of these, till you come to the blackness of savage life. Now make a like map of the prevalence of the Gospel. Mark with white the nations that most obey the Gospel. Darken the color as the nations recede from a pure Gospel, or decline in obedience to it. And the two maps will almost entirely coincide.—*P.*

PRACTICAL.

1. Vers. 1, 2. The workers die, but the work goes on.

2. We win our way to higher stations by faithfully performing the duties of the lower.—*Johnan.*

3. God often commands us to do hard things, but always with the command gives the power of doing.

4. Ver. 3. We really possess only so much of God's promised blessings as we take into our hearts and lives.

5. Ver. 6. It requires courage and faith to possess the promised land, but with these it is sure.

6. Vers. 7, 8. We are fitted to do God's work, and possess the land: (1) by courage; (2) by God's presence; (3) by study of God's word; (4) by obedience; (5) by faith.

7. Study of God's word and obedience are the surest road ever to worldly success.

8. No one need fear with God for his friend.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

We learn from this lesson how to be successful in life. (1) We have the promise of success, vers. 1-4, 9. Note the extent and quality of the promised land, and what it typifies to us. (2) The conditions of success, vers. 5-9: (a) God's presence, ver. 5; (b) courage, vers. 6, 9; (c) obedience to God, ver. 7, 8; (d) study of God's word, ver. 8; (e) and the result of all this upon life—prosperity and success, ver. 7, 8.

WHETHER BOARD SCHOOLS teach teetotalism or not, it is an absolute essential of Sunday School work. The Sunday School teacher who does not recognize this is throwing away a means for usefulness which is immensely greater than he can estimate. For the vice of intemperance has a lodging and spreads its snare over every class of the community. The sweet, bright children who come from happy guarded homes need to have the shield of temperance from the possible harm which may even come to them. There are skeletons in many a home where we least suspect their existence, and the word of a faithful teacher may penetrate, through her or his scholars, where he would not dare to approach to give a needed warning. It is a very solemn and a very sad thought that Sunday School scholars crowd our goals and that even Sunday School teachers may be found there, most of whom trace the beginning of their downward course to strong drink.—*M. A. Paul, in Wiltshire Witness.*