

• The Quiet Hour •

Sober Living.*

BY REV. WAYLAND HOYT, D. D.

Speak thou the thing that befit the sound doctrine (v. 1.) Titus was a companion of Paul, left in Crete by the apostle, in charge of the church there. While Titus was in Crete the apostle wrote him this epistle. Notice the apostle's insistence on sound doctrine; there was no falsely called "liberalism" about him. The truth must always be liberal toward error.

That aged men be temperate (v. 3). Duties of men advanced in life—they are to be "temperate." Dr. Thayer, in his New Testament lexicon, renders the word "abstaining from wine, either entirely or at least from its immoderate use"; no Christian may be the slave of strong drink. "Grave," that is, venerated for character; "sober-minded," that is, exercising self control; "sound in faith," literally "healthy in faith," believing true things and living them.

That they may train the young women to love their husbands (v. 4). Duties of younger women—they are to be shown the duty and beauty of family love and life, as toward husbands and children; the home is woman's empire; it is a peculiar blessing of Christianity that it makes pure and loving homes. Notice what insistence the apostle puts on beautiful example; there is no such preaching as the preaching of the life.

The younger men likewise exhort to be sober-minded (v. 6). Duties of young men—the word "sober-minded" means to be of sound, well mind. No young man can have such a mind who indulges in liquor.

In all things showing thyself an example of good works (v. 7.) If Titus is thus to teach aged men and women, and young men and young women, their duties, he may not himself be other than he teaches.

Exhort servants to be in subjection to their masters (v. 9.) Duties of slaves—for "servants" means slaves, bondmen. Christianity has abolished slavery. What, then, have these directions concerning slaves to do with us? If we are not slaves, it is not infrequent that we find ourselves in very hard places, when it seems to us as if the opportunities we even passionately long for are denied us. What then are we to do? Just what the apostle told Titus to teach these slaves to do in their hard plight; we are "to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour"; we are to show how Christians should be and act in hard places. And this opportunity, not the very hardest place can deprive us of. And in those old times even the slaves triumphed by their beautiful and holy living.

For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men (v. 11.) But in order to attain to such teaching and living, for older people, for younger people, for slaves, for Titus himself, there must be a sufficiently noble and controlling motive. The apostle goes on to disclose the motive. The Christian has the motive of (a) the "grace of God bringing salvation to all men"; (b) the sacrificing Christ, "who gave himself for us"; (c) the purpose of Christ, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity"; (d) "the blessed hope"; for him the future brightens, how dark and hard soever may be the present; (e) "the appearing of the glory of our great God

and Saviour Jesus Christ." Notice how distinctly and unequivocally the apostle affirms here the essential deity of Jesus. He is to appear in glory; in that glory the lowliest Christian, even the poorest slave, shall have limitless share. Therefore, the Christian, impelled by such transcendent motives, is to live in this present world "soberly," as toward himself having the well-balanced, rightly regulated moral life; "righteously," as toward others holding himself in all the relations of integrity; "godly," as toward God, being and doing as he ought.

Let no man despise thee (v. 15.) Titus is to live so that no man may rightfully say of him "I have a better idea of Christian living than he has, judging by his actions." Let us, each one, in the strength of Christ, so act that nobody will have a right thus to despise us.

Now or Never.

When Lady Ann Erskine, passing through a London crowd in her carriage, heard borne on the evening breeze the voice of the preacher, she asked her coachman to drive near to hear what he was saying. Rowland Hill saw her and he stopped in his discourse, and said: "Listen! here is a titled lady. The auction of eternity has begun and there are offers being made for her of high birth tonight. The devil says, I will give pleasure, I will give a presentation to the court, I will give luxury, I will give all the attractions of the world for her! Will the hammer fall? 'Hark!' he said, 'there is another voice that bids. It is the voice of Jesus that says, I will give my life for her, I will give my precious blood for her. I that was born the Son of God, that came from glory, will give myself for her. Sinful and never-dying soul, what is to be the decision? Who is to get her? Now or never?' "Drive on," said Lady Erskine to her coachman, but up there in her room that night the arrow had gone home, and she put aside her high birth and her society life and her pride of blood, and accepted Christ.

Forgiveness.

BY JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

My heart was heavy, for its trust had been
Abused, its kindness answered with foul wrong;
So, turning gloomily from my fellow-men,
One summer Sabbath day, I strolled among
The green mounds of the village burial-place;
Where, pondering how all human love and hate
Find one sad level: and how, soon or late,
Wronged and wrong-doer each with meekened
face,
And cold hands folded over a still heart,
Pass the green threshold of our common grave,
Whither all footsteps tend, and none depart,
Awe'd for myself, and pitying my race,
Our common sorrow, like a mighty wave,
Swept all my pride away, and trembling I forgave.

Paul could not have been a successful apostle in secret, any more than he could have been a successful tent-maker. Tent-making was his trade, and preaching the gospel was his business; and in the nature of the case, public profession was essential to his success in either direction. The same is true of us today, and for the same obvious reasons.

There is more said in the Bible about
praise than about prayer.—D. L. Moody.

Still Powerful.

Rev. J. W. MacKenzie, of Efate, New Hebrides, tells an interesting story of a conversion to the Presbyterian Witness, in terms following:

It has frequently occurred to me that it might interest those of your readers who support us here were I to give a short account of one of our converts, a young woman, a half caste, named Sera. Her mother, a very bad woman, left her husband, and ran away to Noumea in a labour vessel. There she took up with a white man, and afterwards came with him to Ambrim, where they had a copra station. He was a man addicted to drink, and after being there two or three years he drank a bottle of gin one night and died from its effects. Little Sera was then about 8 years of age, and along with her mother went to live with the natives of that island. Her mother became the wife of a man who already had a wife, and the two women constantly quarrelled. Sera was betrothed to some one in the village, played with the children, and learned their language and ways, and was as much a little savage as any of them. The unhappy life of her mother had caused her to think of her friends and her own island home, and often she tried to get away in one of the vessels that came to Ambrim. Once or twice she had a good opportunity of making her escape, but she could not prevail on little Sera, who was as wild as a hare, to go on board.

At last, however, she succeeded in getting her little girl into a canoe, and away she paddled without being discovered, to a ship lying in the offing. She was brought home to her own island a soberer woman than when she left it. After being home a day or two she came to us with her little girl and asked us to take charge of her and teach her. She remained with us learning to read, and to do little things about, but often severely trying our patience, and giving us many a sore heart with her wild, thoughtless ways.

As years went by she grew taller and stronger and smarter and more useful, until she was able to do almost any kind of house work, darning, sewing, cooking, baking, &c. Being so smart she was taught to use the sewing machine, and soon became as expert with it as any English girl. She could read fluently both English and native, could write a good hand, and had some knowledge of arithmetic, &c. At length her hand was in marriage, and she became the wife of the chief of Erakor's son. By this time she was a well-behaved, thoughtful young woman, and was admitted to the catechumen's class. In due time she became a church member and took her seat at the table of the Lord. A short time ago she dedicated her little one to the Saviour in baptism, which was a touching sight.

In conclusion, I just wish that some of our supporters could see Sera sitting at her own sewing machine, purchased with her own earnings, as with nimble fingers she shapes into dresses the material supplied her by the manager of the English company's store, for each of which when finished she receives 2s.

When prayer brings no solace to your
weary heart, try praise.—Anon.

No life is all that the liver of it meant to
be when he began. We dream of building
palaces or temples, and we have to content
ourself if we can put up some little shed
in which we may shelter.—Alex. MacLaren.

*S. S. Lesson, Nov. 25, Titus 2: 1-15. Golden Text—We should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.—Tit. 2: 12.