

For Dominion Presbyterian.

The Boy of the Twentieth Century.

BY REV. DR. J. A. R. DICKSON, GALT.

God bless the lad! May the goodwill of Him that dwelt in the bush rest upon him, and abide with him! His is a noble heritage, but the nobler the heritage, the greater the temptations and the weightier the responsibilities it brings. His is a time of large opportunity, which though fruitful of far-reaching issues for good may be foolishly missed or thoughtlessly marred. His are conditions of peculiar force and singular richness, such as have been the lot of few in the generations of the past; and these conditions, though charged with the highest conceivable privilege and promise, are also full of danger and untold peril. So that while our boy of the twentieth century is to be sincerely congratulated, he at the same time, is to be seriously cautioned. While vast wealth of resources is his, that very wealth may become his snare and his ruin, because it carries his heart away to that which is only a shadow and not a substance; a passing show and not an eternal reality. He is dazzled by the glittering splendor so near his eyes, and blinded to that which is real and enduring, by that which passes away.

He stands forth in a time that is noisy with the clatter of all kinds of machinery; bustling with the rapid, jostling movements of commercial activity; and thrilling the nerves with a competition that was never so keen before among men. Daily newspapers supply him with news in such a shape, and with the discussion of topics, of moment and of no moment, in such a form, that he is not called upon to reflect and judge, but simply to accept or reject. The electric telegraph puts within his hearing intelligence from every outlying country, and the telephone gives him familiar voices from every part of our fair Dominion. The steam engine installed in the bosom of a ship or harnessed to a train of coaches, carries its freight afield with speed that almost annihilates space. And there is such an understanding of atmospheric laws that the messages of the electric telegraph are sent over large areas without the use of wires, and received by instruments of so sensitive a touch that nothing is lost. Modern science has reaped a rich harvest from the seeds of Inductive Science sown by Lord Bacon. It has made the very air tremble with the haste to be rich, and heated the atmosphere about us to such an extent that men live in a perpetual fever which renders the heart restless and makes the life uneasy, and touches the tongue with a sharp and biting thirst.

Never was there an environment so laden with the influence of material forces, and so full of exciting energy and engrossing concern. It is intoxicating; and like everything that intoxicates, it has a deadening effect on the higher part of man's nature. It calls loudly for counsel, that the high hope and beautiful outlook of the lad be not dashed with despair. What then shall we say to our bright boy of the twentieth century? Our brave and dauntless Canadian youth, one of the best types of young men as has been shown on the hot plains and stony hills of South Africa? What shall we say? Just two or three things.

Nourish the Brain With Plenty of Sound Sleep.

The old proverb is well worthy of being acted upon: "Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." Keeping timely hours tends to both health and happiness. It is a most excellent rule, to retire at ten and rise at six. Two hours sleep before twelve are worth

four after twelve, and that for this reason, it is more seasonable. Some will affirm that it matters not *when* we sleep so long as we do sleep, but nature itself tells us that night is the season for repose. Shakespeare with his clear insight apostrophizes sleep thus: "Sleep! O gentle Sleep! Nature's soft nurse." Edward Young in his pregnant "Night Thoughts" sings in the same strain: "Tired Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep." There is in sleep a marvellous medicine for both body and brain. In its proper proportion it is absolutely necessary for the perfection of health. It tempers the tissues of the physical frame, and it tones up the nervous system; but it tunes the mind and heart to joyful and glad some song. It carries health in its hand. It gives a cool head, a rested mind, a good memory, an easy conscience and therefore a manly upright walk.

"Early to Bed"

is to many a boy salvation from moral ruin. As ravenous beasts come forth from their lair under the cover of darkness, so dangerous companions conceal themselves in the same way. Temptations are strewn thickly in the night. The darkness without too of ten become darkness within by evil doing and self-indulgence and vice.

Never Touch Anything That Intoxicates.

How strangely meanings get covered up under harmless looking words! Intoxicate means to poison. Spirituous liquors intoxicate, that is, they poison. But we are not accustomed to think of spirituous liquors as poisons and therefore we use them without fear. Yet they in time have their revenge, and a terrible revenge it is! They wreck the fine faculties of the brain; they ruin the tender sensibilities of the heart; they destroy the powers of the will and the conscience. Under the curse of the intoxicating cup man lies as though he were smitten by lightning. Flee from the wine cup! Listen to testimony that no one will dare to question: "Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? (What a picture that is! Vivid and impressive. Every touch tells. And how true to the facts of the case. What then is the answer?) They that tarry long at the wine; They that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth up on the top of a mast. They have stricken me shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me and I felt it not; when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." If that passage is well thought out nothing more will be needed. It is complete. And it tells us that to use intoxicating drink is at once physical, moral and spiritual ruin. That is the door by which a vile brood of evil forces enter to prey upon drink's miserable victim: Falsehood, impurity, gambling, strife, bloodshed, wrath. Therefore our boy of the twentieth century to be every whit himself must not touch that which is only and ever—accursed.

Choose the Companionship of Good Men.

Those whose fellowship shall elevate and enoble. Those who have in themselves an honorable character. Youth is attracted by the cheerful and bright, the rollicking and free—not to say, fast. The young man who is bold, venturesome, even devil-may-care, in his manner is apt to seize on the imagination

and take the fancy of our boy, while the better man because he is a little stern and severe, and may be, hard, repels him.

But he should discriminate between them, and ask, which shall be more helpful? Which shall fit me best for a true and worthy manhood? Which shall I love the longest, and revere the most? And the answer will doubtless be: the good man and not the bad; the wise man and not the wild; the pure man and not the vile; the truthful man and not the liar. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

The fun of the fool too often captivates our boy, while the sobriety of the wise drives him away. But he should remember that companionship is an unspeakably strong force in the formation of character, and therefore he should choose the best. He may company with the best, the wisest, the highest and holiest the world has ever seen. And who is he? Jesus Christ the Son of God, who came to redeem him from all evil, and restore him to the fellowship of God. Christ stands with extended and open hand bidding him welcome, saying: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He goes to the root of all our unrest, and puts away our sin by the sacrifice of himself, and he rises to the height of our greatest need, by bringing to us the life of God.

Our boy of the twentieth century, to have the loftiest ideals of life, to possess the best character, to do the most enduring work, and to enjoy the greatness happiness—must be a true Christian.

Lessons From the Life of Hezekiah.

BY REV. C. M. COOKE.

It was universally held that two of the greatest influences in the formation of character were heredity and environment, and certainly the child born into the world with Christian parents and living in a good home had a great advantage over the children of whom it had been terribly said that they were "damned into the world" with dissipated parents and immoral surroundings. Yet here was Hezekiah, whose father was one of the worst kings of Judah, a man so bad that even in the eyes of a degraded people and a corrupt priesthood, he was not fit to find a resting place in the royal tombs, and whose youth was spent amid the temptations of a court steeped in idolatry and wickedness, rising out of this moral mire and spiritual miasma and gaining a name in history for pleasing God, and as the regenerator of his country. The lesson taught by this was the sovereignty of Divine grace, which could enable a man to overcome even such disadvantages as those surrounding Hezekiah's early days, and to keep himself true to high ideals amid all the degrading influences of a wicked court. The second lesson which the preacher drew from the life this good king had to do with man's relationship to his fellow men. All that was absolutely required of a Christian in this regard was to live at peace with his fellows, and to keep himself free from the contamination of the world. Yet a higher and nobler ideal than this was held up, which man was invited to strive to attain, by not only living peaceably with his neighbors, but also striving to raise them up, and by not simply contenting oneself with keeping out of evil, but endeavouring to remove the stumbling blocks from the paths of others. Hezekiah was a noble example of this higher form of life. Not content with fighting his own battles against the