

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

PAUL ON SELF-DENIAL.*

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, D.D.

Said Moltke, the famous German general: "Beer is a far more dangerous enemy to Germany than all the armies of France." President Taft, when Secretary of War, said: "With men who are incapacitated first during the preliminary activities of any campaign are the drinkers. The same is true in every effort of life which demands the best energy of a man. To the man who is actively engaged in responsible work, who must have at his command the best that is in him, at his best—to him I would, with all emphasis that I possess, advise and urge to leave drink alone, absolutely. He who drinks is deliberately disqualifying himself for advancement. Personally I refuse to take such a risk. I do not drink."

Rev. Paul Bull, a traveler in South Africa, writes: "Alcoholism is a stimulant, not a food. It calls out strength, it does not put it in. I rode for 800 miles over South Africa on a pony. When I wanted to put strength into my pony I didn't feed him on spurs; I fed him on oats. Oats put strength into him. Spurs only call it out. When we came to a river came in useful. You see the smart of the spur called out all my pony's strength; it didn't put any in. So it is with alcohol. It makes a fellow feel stronger for the moment; but he is only using up more of his strength, not getting fresh strength."

There is a striking picture in the Book of Proverbs of a little city with few inhabitants besieged by a great king with a large army. But there was in the city a poor wise man, and by his wisdom the city was saved. There is not a city or town or village or country district in our land that has not a powerful enemy in the drink traffic. And every wise man, however poor, can help to defeat that foe. It is not necessary to wait until Local Option is carried, or until Prohibition becomes the law of the land. If each one were to say, "I will not drink, and I will try to keep others from drinking," the whole matter would be settled. And no one with even a small amount of wisdom, can seriously question that it would be a good thing to be rid of the abominable business.

An old monk was once taking a walk through a forest with a scholar by his side. He suddenly stopped, and pointed to four plants close at hand. The first was just beginning to peep, the second was well rotted in the earth, the third was a small shrub, while the fourth was a full-sized tree. One after another the lad was directed to pull them up. The first and second were not hard to move, but the third taxed his strength to the utmost. "Now," said the master, "try the fourth." But all his efforts to uproot it scarcely shook the leaves of the tree. "This, my son, is what happens with our bad habits and passions. If we let them cast their roots deep down into our souls, no human power can uproot them; God alone can pluck them out."

In the following table the Provinces of the Dominion are arranged according to the extent of the prohibition area in each, beginning with the Province entirely under prohibition and going down to the Province with the least part of its territory under prohibition. In 1907 convictions for crime were, in each case, in the proportion of one to the numbers opposite the name of the Province.

*S. S. Lesson, November 28, 1909.—Romans 14: 10-21. Commit to memory vs. 19, 20. Golden Text—It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth.—Romans 14:21.

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| Prince Edward Island | 428 |
| Nova Scotia | 93 |
| New Brunswick | 113 |
| Quebec | 115 |
| Ontario | 73 |
| Manitoba | 41 |
| Northwest Provinces | 60 |
| British Columbia | 49 |

These statistics prove conclusively, that where the liquor traffic is curtailed, crime is correspondingly lessened.

The Arabs have a saying about the palm tree that it stands with its feet in salt water and its head in the sun. They often cannot drink of the brackish water found in the oasis where the palm grows, but they tap the tree and drink the sweet palm wine. The palm tree by the magic of its inner life, can so change the elements found in the unkindly soil around it that they minister to its growth and strength and fruit-bearing. Each of us, during his earthly life, must stand where all around his feet are temptations to walk in evil ways. None of these temptations is more universal than that of strong drink. But if we have the life within us which Jesus gives, we shall be able not only to resist every temptation and to live strong, pure lives ourselves, but also to be sources of strength and help to others round about us.

THE REBUILDING.

Amos R. Wells, in S. S. Times.

"Except Jehovah build the house, they labor in vain that build it."—Psalm 127:1.

My house is builded, Lord; build it anew!
Once more the timbers hew;
And all the firm foundation lay again
In love for Thee and men.

Reset the window-panes, so wrinkled now,
And make them clear as Thou.
Enlarge the hearth and magnify the door
For strangers and the poor.

Insert a closet dedicate to prayer
That I may meet Thee there;
And build a workshop, whereso'er it be,
That I may toil with Thee.

The mansion of my building, let it fall,
Unworthy, roof and wall;
And in its place, O heavenly Architect!
A better house erect.

WEIGHING IT FOR YOURSELF.

No opinion on any subject of common knowledge is worth much to a man until he has weighed that opinion for himself. Yet most of us take our opinions from others without any weighing. A recent remark of one of the leading Old Testament scholars of this country is significant in this connection. He had expressed a most revealing opinion of a certain unworthy method of Bible study and of one of its chief advocates. When his permission was asked to use his own name in quoting what he had said, he answered: "I have no objection, in any case where quoting it from me would add weight to the opinion expressed. I think, however, that the strength of the opinion lies in the opinion itself. If a name is mentioned with a statement, what will count will commonly be the name. If the statement is given without the name, it is possible that a reader will weigh the statement for himself." The bigger the name, the more insistent we need to be with ourselves to apply the weighing test.

Good intentions will not save the man who, despising the warning, steps over the precipice.

IDEALS OF WORSHIP.

How can we know the experience of the spiritual cleansing and healing which belongs with worship? How can we know its relief, its joy, its exaltation, and its peace? First of all, it must come from an assured sense of communion with God. If we confess our sins, it must be to One whom we know is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. If we express our gratitude, it is because the good things we have received bear the marks of our Father. If we offer praises, they will be the spontaneous tribute of adoration of the perfect being who values our wondering love. If we ask for anything from God, it is because the thing sought seems to us worthy in itself and worthy of the thought of him who is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask."

Such worship is uplifting in proportion to our conception of the worth and dignity of the object of our worship. "Shall I lift up mine eyes unto the mountains to seek the source of strength to help I need?" sang the Hebrew worshipper. "Nay, but to the Maker of the mountains and of heaven and earth." One is carried out of and above himself when he bows down before him who dwelleth in the high and lofty place, who inhabiteth eternity.

But he who is above all must also be near us if we are to worship him. He is a Spirit and must be worshipped in spirit. But he is the Spirit who anointed Jesus of Nazareth to preach good news to the needy and to be a ministering presence. Is it a thing to be wondered at that men pray to Jesus Christ, who manifests to them the Father, and that it is through him that they have access to the Father?

Simplicity befits worship in which reverence and love blend in the outpouring of the heart. We speak to God in our closets because thought and feeling crave expression in words. But we do not speak for the sake of speaking, nor because we think He does not know our needs till we tell them.

Worship is enriched by being shared. The communion of worshippers is only second in importance to communion with God. Spiritual exhilaration through the worship of believers together is one of the most real and vital elements of religious experience. The man who does not cultivate it loses a large and precious portion of the life allotted to him in this world. The pastor who does not make that the constant object of his labors will miss the main fruit of his ministry.

From the uplifting of worship in common with other children of God in his house of prayer we return to our closets with renewed joy and power to meet him who sees in secret and rewards openly. There pulses constantly the heart of the Church of Christ.—The Congregationalist.

The city of holiness, the City of God, lieth four square, a side of love, a side of hope, a side of obedience, a side of righteousness. Each side with three gates, and the gates are open continually. So many sides to the City of Manhood under God, and yet just one "narrow way" of entrance through all the gates; just one sort of gateway on each side of the four sides; just one fact underneath all true life, whether we enter by love or hope, or obedience, or righteousness, and that one fact is faith! Every one of the four sides of the heavenly city teaches the old doctrine of justification by faith.—F. W. Gunsaulus.

To repeat an ill report is to pour oil upon a fire. That is excellent advice given by Charles H. Spurgeon: "When you hear an ill report about anybody, halve and quarter it—and then say nothing about the rest."