

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLETHE WORLD'S TEMPERANCE
SUNDAY.*

By Rev. Clarence McKinnon, D.D.

Woe unto them that follow strong drink, v. 11. On March 8th, 1880, Mr. Gladstone, then the Prime Minister of Great Britain, delivered the following speech in the House of Commons: "It has been said that greater calamities are inflicted on mankind by intemperance than by the three great historical scourges—war, pestilence, and famine. That is true for us, and it is the measure of our discredit and disgrace." The same tale of woe comes from the United States, and on every hand, in prosperous Canada, pauperism, lunacy, divorce, crime, vagrancy and death are seen to be the natural fruits of this unnatural vice.

They regard not the work of the Lord, v. 12. That drinking habits deaden the soul to spiritual interests finds a remarkable proof in the fact that temperance reform has been the forerunner of great religious revivals. The revival wave of 1825-28 followed an unusual temperance agitation. Of the 100 towns through which this reform swept, no less than 275 experienced the blessings of revival immediately afterwards. The deep awakening in Dr. Cuyler's Brooklyn church in 1865 had its origin in a similar manner. Repentance of the sin of intemperance, men turned to God for help, and the obstacle now being removed, He entered the people's hearts and manifested His presence in a very gracious way. Those who live on the bush prairie know well that the brush must first be cleared away, the wolf willow rooted out, before the fertile soil can receive the fruitful seed. In like manner evil appetites, such as that for strong drink, must be rooted from the heart before it can be made receptive of the Word of God.

Captivity, v. 13. Bonnavard, the famous prisoner of Chillon, was immured in a dungeon whose floor was below the level of the waters of Lake Geneva. Years he spent in this damp and dismal spot, until his lonely heart was turned to stone. Then it was that one day a little bird sang at his barred window the sweetest song he ever heard. It brought him new life. He resolved to climb those grim prison walls and gaze out of that barred window. Day by day he cut footholds in the stone until at length he reached the narrow grating and looked yearningly on the majestic Swiss mountains, with their summits of eternal snows. These unchanging mountains brought peace to his heart. They taught him patience, and he waited now with new hope until the hour of his release. Many have gone into captivity in the gloomy prison of strong drink. They have lain there helpless. They believed that there was no deliverance for them. They became dead to friends, to happiness, to hope. Their heart was turned to stone. But the sweet message of the gospel was sung in their ears. Making footholds of the promises of God, they climbed till they beheld the majesty of His power and His unchanging love, and then the prison doors were opened and they found release.

Woe unto them, wise in their own eyes, prudent in their own sight, v. 21. Dr. Livingstone came across a tribe in

Africa, who had never seen a mirror before. When some of them beheld their faces in the glass for the first time, their observations were of a disappointed nature. "Is that I? How ugly I am!" "What a queer fellow!" "What a homely nose!" Some fathers have held up a looking glass before their children when in a passion, that they might see how distorted their faces had become and learn how they appeared to other folks. If one is inclined to feel wise in his own eyes, or prudent in his own sight, it would be well for him to look into God's Word, and in particular into this chapter, that he may learn the humiliating but wholesome truth of how different he appears in the searching eyes of God, and how quickly his self-assumed wisdom and prudence will come to naught!

Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, v. 22. Last August the British Medical Association met in Toronto. Among its foremost members were Sir Victor Horsley and Professor Woodhead, the one a surgeon and the other a physician of great eminence in England. Both of these declared emphatically that alcohol is of little or no value as a medicine. Sir Victor showed that in seven London hospitals the expenditure for alcohol has diminished from \$40,000 in 1862 to \$15,000 in 1902. Professor Woodhead quoted Dr. Moorehead, a prominent Edinburgh physician of twenty-five years ago, as saying that when a patient ill with pneumonia had had no alcohol, he had seldom any doubt as to the result, and that he never found it necessary to give alcohol in those cases, in fact the patients did better without it. It is said that many of the best football players in England are total abstainers. We do not need drink to make or keep us strong.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. James Ross, D.D.

Follow Strong Drink — Drunkenness is a very ancient vice. One of Egypt's sages says to his pupils, "Drink not to excess. The words that come out of thy mouth thou canst not recall. Thou dost fall and break thy limbs and no one reaches out a hand to thee. Thy comrades go on drinking and say, 'Away with this fellow who is drunk.' If anyone should seek thee to ask counsel of thee, thou wouldst be found lying in the dust like a little child." Another lament to a scholar, "I am told that thou dost forsake books, thou dost abandon thyself to pleasure, thou dost wander from street to street, every evening the smell of beer scares men away from thee, it destroys thy soul. Thou art as a broken oar that can guide to neither side, thou art a temple without its god, a house without bread. Thou art caught as thou dost climb upon the walls and dost break the plank, the people flee from thee because thou dost strike and wound them. O that thou didst understand that wine is an abomination, that thou wouldst abjure the strong drink, that thou didst not set thine heart on cool drinks, that thou wouldst forget the sweet spiced wine!"

At the end of life we shall not be asked how much pleasure we had in it, but how much service we gave in it; not how full it was of success, but how full it was of sacrifice; not how happy we were, but how helpful we were; not how ambition was gratified, but how love was served.—Hugh Black.

THE ONE IMPORTANT HERESY.

The worst heresy is not that of the intellect; it is the heresy of the heart, the heresy that affects the everyday life and practice of men. It is the belief in the life of Jesus Christ as the example of our lives, and then to live our lives for ourselves and ours, giving only a petty toll to what we call charity, that is to deny the very foundation principle of the teaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. To declare our belief that through Him and His sacrifice we are redeemed, to say that on Him we cast ourselves for salvation, and then to make a mockery of it all by living our lives for ourselves, not sharing His sacrifice with Him, nor devoting ourselves to the service of our less fortunate brethren, that is to be like the devils of whom St. James speaks who have faith without works.

This is the great heresy, the deadly heresy, the heresy of the denial of Jesus Christ in our lives. And it is precisely the heresy that is most widespread as well as dangerous, in our churches everywhere, tempting each of us day by day. Is this not part of what the church means to teach us when she makes holy communion one of the two sacraments "generally necessary to salvation?" The very name communion, suggests that our relation to one another in Christ is an absolute essential of our relation to God; that it is impossible to be a child of the Father in heaven unless one is in very truth a brother of his fellow-men. It is a "communion" because the union that we seek with God must be attained with and through our brothers.

A brotherhood that exists only within the walls of the church is a scam and a hypocrisy. To profess that brotherhood and not to carry it into business and social relations, to leave it out of the warp and woof of our daily life, is to be false to the Christ we confess and to the gospel in which we profess to trust. He who professes to give himself and all that he has to the service of the Master—which for us is the service of our fellow-men—and then gives but a part, and holds back the rest, like Ananias and Sapphira, is already on the threshold of spiritual death. The man who does that cannot enter into life, for life is love and love is sacrifice, and if there is no sacrifice all his profession of religion is vain.—N. Y. Churchman.

PRAYER.

O Lord, let our houses be precious to Thee; watch the roof that the storm break not through; secure the foundation that it be not burned up; send a plentiful light upon the windows, and keep the enemy far away from our door; and let the interior of our house be full of heaven's own color and home's sweetest music. Make the bed when no other hands can make it, because of our affliction and soreness and infirmity; speak to us when no other voice can reach us, and let thy whispered love strengthen us with conscious immortality; be with the old, the weary, and the sad; the young, the energetic, and the buoyant; and find for us, by way of the cross, by way of Calvary, a common home, a meeting place in heaven, where we shall forget all darkness, all sin, all pain, all death, for the former things have passed away. Amen.

The trusting soul does not leap from pinnacles to test the faithfulness of God. It goes into solitude and falls upon its knees.

* S. S. Lesson, November 25, 1906. Isaiah 5: 11-23. Commit to memory v. 11. Read 1 Kings 20: 13-21. Golden Text—I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.—1 Corinthians 9: 27.