

LESSON XI—December 13th, 1896.

Cautions Against Intemperance. PROV. 23 : 15-25.

(Commit to memory verses 19-21).

GOLDEN TEXT : "For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." Prov. 3 : 21.

PROVE THAT—We should avoid bad company. Prov. 4 : 14.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 73, 74, 75.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 5, 116, 173, 40.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Cautions against intemperance. Prov. 23 : 15-25. *Tuesday.* "Who hath sorrow?" Prov. 23 : 29-35. *Wednesday.* Woe to the drunkard. Isa. 5 : 11-19. *Thursday.* God's anger against sin. Isa. 5 : 20-25. *Friday.* Wine a mocker. Prov. 20 : 1-11. *Saturday.* Avoiding evil-doers. Ps. 26. *Sabbath.* Be separate. 2 Cor. 6 : 11-18. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. Not long ago in one of the towns in the United States a travelling menagerie was exhibiting its collection of fierce and of curious animals. In order to attract the crowd a young lion was chained near the entrance. It was believed to be perfectly tame and harmless and its keeper was by its side. Nevertheless the wise gave it a wide berth and contented themselves with admiring at a distance. A little girl, however, innocently ran up to it and before anyone could interfere the ferocious nature of the animal awoke, and seizing the child, as a cat would a mouse, he shook her and crushed her to death in an instant. The frantic mother could hardly be restrained by force from throwing herself on the savage beast. Like this young lion, as soon as the cub of the drinking habit has become full grown, it will assert its power, destroy self-control and hurry its thoughtless victim to disgrace and death.

LESSON PLAN. I. True Wisdom. vs. 15-19. II. Self Control. vs. 20, 21. III. Filial Piety. vs. 22-25.

Because our hearts beat fast or slow in response to our emotions the ancients thought that here was the seat of the soul and all the spiritual energies. The heart was wise or foolish, loved or hated. To have a wise heart meant not only to know what was right, but to do it ; well.¹ So also the mouth responds to the intimations of the heart² and its utterances declare the real inward character of the man.³ How careful we should be always to speak loving and true words since angry and cruel ones may do so much harm to ourselves and others.⁴ It is sometimes hard not to envy the prosperity of the covetous and worldly. Our sinful nature longs for "the flesh pots of Egypt," but their happiness is shallow and transitory,⁵ while the riches and blessedness of the true christian are eternal and complete.⁶ A day of settlement is coming when the inequalities of this life will receive their compensations.⁷ The strait and narrow way may not be pleasing to the flesh⁸ but it leads right onward to heaven. Solomon denounces three great enemies of prosperity in this life and salvation in the next—drunkenness, gluttony and sloth. The first of these is one of the great evils of our own

time. It leads every other vice in its train. One does not need to wait until he is a drunkard to experience the dangers of indulgence in strong drink. The "winebibber," or "moderate drinker," has already gone far on the road to poverty and destruction. The only safe rule is never to taste the intoxicating cup.⁹ Many who would not taste wine yet allow themselves to indulge excessively in the pleasures of the palate. This does not work such widespread evil to others and so passes almost uncensured, but it is equally ruinous to the immortal soul. Its dulls the spiritual sense and relaxes the moral strength. Fleshly lusts follow in its train.¹⁰ Idleness is characteristic of the pleasure-seeker and can lead to but one goal, mental and moral poverty. True riches and lasting pleasures are found only in Christ, and these we may have without money and without price.¹¹ The desire of winning praise is a powerful motive and most of us govern our conduct by it to a greater or less degree. How foolish to court the applause of the careless and profane when a filial regard to the instruction of parents would gain for us the loving approval of the wisest and best earthly friends.¹²

¹1ch. 4 : 23. ²2Luke 6 : 45. ³3Matt. 12 : 37; Luke 6 : 45. ⁴4Jas. 3 : 2, 13. ⁵5Ps. 73 : 17-20. ⁶61 Cor. 2 : 9. ⁷7Ps. 34 : 9; John 10 : 28. ⁸8Matt. 7 : 14. ⁹9Prov. 20 : 1; Isa. 5 : 11; Hab. 2 : 15. ¹⁰101 Pet. 2 : 11; 4 : 3; Phil. 3 : 19. ¹¹11Isa. 55 : 1; 2 Tim. 3 : 15. ¹²12Ex. 20 : 12; Eph. 6 : 23; Prov. 20 : 30; 30 : 17.

LESSONS. 1. Be careful what you say and how you say it. 2. It is foolish to envy the pleasures of the ungodly. 3. Drunkenness, gluttony and laziness generally go together. 4. We are never too old to love and respect our parents. 5. We may have the best riches for nothing.