

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

TEMPERANCE LESSON.*

Let no man deceive you with empty words. Rev. Ver., v. 6.—Alcohol is sometimes recommended as a means of health. The sanest physicians contradict this. They say it makes the body and brain and nerves weak. "If all died who are now healed by it, a thousand to one would survive who die from its effects." When all the attempts to deceive have been made, the fact still remains that the flesh of a drunkard will not readily heal if injured; athletes are not allowed to use alcohol; business men will not employ habitual drinkers; engineers on railroads are forbidden the use of liquor. It rouses the passions, kindles anger, gives brutal courage to the murderer—kills the love of parents for their children. The very victims of it loathe it and denounce it as degrading and destroying. Beware of the words that commend the use of this dangerous drink. They are deceptive words and should be regarded as "empty."

Have no fellowship with the unfriended works of darkness, v. 11.—Safety lies in avoidance of the tempting agents. A man who had overcome the habit of drink was caught in a rain storm one day. Looking for shelter, the only near place was the open door of a saloon. Ignoring his reproving conscience, he went in, sat down, and began to read a newspaper. He told afterwards how that paper would lower itself, so that he could see the decanters and bottles behind the bar. It seemed to him that every one of these bottles had a voice and an arm. He imagined he could hear each of them say, "Here you are, wet; you need what I contain. Just one drink will do you good; you are a weak fool if you refuse to take me." It seemed, too, as if they reached out strong arms to pull him toward them. He thrust up the paper to shut off the sight of them, but, in spite of him, it lowered itself and the bottles began again to beckon to him. Then he realized his situation, and springing up, he rushed out into the streaming rain and walked home trembling but triumphant. But he had almost yielded, and he vowed never again to enter a saloon. He thought the power of his old habit was dead, and it was, until the saloon atmosphere revived it. Keep out of the place and way of temptation.

Christ shall give thee light, v. 14.—There is darkness and peril in every life, until Christ chases away the sin we love. Safety is found only in Him. He is seeking for those who would be rid of the tendency to evil ways. He welcomes the appeal of any who are "sick, and helpless, and ready to die." When the beautiful Marie Antoinette was on her way to Paris to be crowned queen of the French, orders were given that all cripples and ragged and blind and debauched persons should be kept away from the roads she was to travel over, that she might not be shocked by sights of suffering. No such commands were given when Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. He is the same now. The poor drunkard has a Friend in Him. The pure lad, who would live soberly in this evil world, has a Friend in Him. When our temperance pledges and our temperance

performances are inspired by Him, we shall not fail.

Look therefore carefully how ye walk (Rev. Ver.), v. 15.—The last descendants of a dynasty of French kings were called in contempt, "do-nothing kings." At the moment when matters demanded from the king very great care and cleverness, these monarchs, each in his time, fell into a condition of indifference and carelessness. When the reasons came to light later, it was found that a course of intemperance and debauchery had brought them down to mental and moral imbecility. Few of them attained the age of mature manhood, and their names are perpetuated in disgrace. Carelessness made them castaways. How are the young of today walking? Do they know that the wine cup is a dangerous thing? Are they careful to guard against indulgence in drink getting into their life? Alcohol drowns one's brain, and ruins body and soul. He is a king who has a sound mind in a sound body. Beware of habits that take away these kindly qualities.

Be not drunken with wine wherein is riot (Rev. Ver.), v. 18.—Rum creates riot in the head of the drinker, and spreads riot around. The story is told of a little girl who lay dying. The child had been struck on the spine by her drunken father. Gathered about her was a group of neighbors, one of the number being the saloon keeper patronized by her father. Some one said, "It was the blow that killed her." The dying child heard the remark, and looking the rum-seller in the face gasped, "You did it. You did it," and died. Were all the truth known with respect to the relation of cruelty and crime to the liquor traffic that sentence of the little girl would doubtless find just application in thousands of instances.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

(By Rev. James Ross, D.D.)

Hymns—The Psalms were the first hymns used in Christian worship, but very early the enthusiasm of Christian love and very zeal expressed itself in forms of rhythmic praise. The songs of the angels at the birth of Jesus, of Mary, Simeon, Zacharias and Elizabeth (see Luke, ch. 1), are incorporated in the Gospel narrative; and they soon had imitators among Christians, who desired to praise Christ directly, and to express the broader devotional spirit, which had broken down all social and national distinctions and united all believers in one holy communion. We have the thanksgiving of Peter after his deliverance (Acts 12:11); the speaking with tongues, which was always in the elevated language of enthusiasm, the fragments of hymns scattered through the epistles (see Eph. 5:14; 1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; 1 Pet. 3:10-12); the lyrical and antiphonal passages, the doxologies and antiphones of the Apocalypse. Bishops and councils hesitated to sanction hymns in public worship, partly because heretical leaders were among the first to throw their dogmas into poetical form, and thus make them popular. But while none of the compositions of the first two centuries have come down to us, except those embedded in the scriptures, there are many allusions to the singing of the church. Pliny speaks of the Christians' singing hymns to Christ as God, and Basil, of hymns of the Holy Spirit.

THE PURPOSE IN PRAYER.

"Just so far as we listen to the voice and language that God speaks, we shall learn to speak in the voice and language that God hears." I do not mean to say that prayer may not be a straightforward and unhesitating petition, and least of all would I desire to minimize the value of intercessory prayer. I can think of nothing so blessed as to pray and feel that the heavens are open, and that however careless men may be there is quenchless interest in heaven in our behalf. The great purpose in prayer is that we may change eyes with God, that we may lay down our plans at his feet, and receive instead his perfect will. Jesus himself becomes our example in the garden of Gethsemane. Under the spell of prayer the cry, "Let this cup pass" changes to, "Thy will be done."

Into the woods my Master went, clean foreseen, foreseen,
Into the woods my Master came, foreseen with love and shame.
Out of the woods my Master went, and He was well content,
Out of the woods my Master came, content with death and shame."

What is the agony of Gethsemane if a man can get out of it a victory like that? Many of us are not insistent in our prayers. We pray and run away. We do not wait to see if God is not handing down some great gift for us. Manton, the old Puritan preacher, quaintly says, "Foolish boys that knock at a door in wantonness will not stay till somebody cometh to open to them, but a man that hath business will knock and knock again until his call is answered." When we use our telephones, we are not content until we hear the voice of the one we seek. There are many who undertake to talk with God, but they hang up the receiver before the answer comes. Wait until there is an answer from the responsive heavens; wait until there is borne in upon your soul the fact of God's abiding love and care for you. Then you can rise from your knees and go forty days if necessary in the strength of that revelation of the heart of God. —From "Pastoral and Personal Evangelism."

Our God is the God of contrasts. Job speaks of the sweet influences of the Pleiades and the bands of Orion. The former was the harbinger of spring, the latter presaged the wintry storm.

Before any work for God always comes the vision of God. To behold him, to be lifted up above our troubled hearts, above our worries and discords, and to be absolutely sure that we have spoken with God and he has spoken with us—this is the indispensable preliminary of doing anything whatsoever in God's service. If a servant of God is uncertain of his Master, he will be uncertain of everything that follows in his service. If you and I have no doubt about having seen God, then our divine service will grow sweeter and clearer and easier every year we live. I have had men say to me: "Didn't Paul's Christian life begin with the question, 'What wilt thou have me to do?'" No, it did not; no life begins with that question. It begins with the question, "Who art thou, Lord?" When Paul settled that it was the risen Christ who appeared to him, then came the much easier question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" We can not feed the multitude out of an empty basket; we can not present the Lord until we have seen the Lord.

S. S. Lesson, June 13—Ephesians 5: 62. Commit to memory vs. 15, 16 Golden Text—Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.—Ephesians 5:18.