



LESSON,—SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 1908.

Temperance Lesson.

Prov. xxiii., 29-35. Memory verse 31.

Golden Text.

At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.—Prov. xxiii., 32.

Home Readings.

- Monday, March 23.—Prov. xxiii., 20-35.
- Tuesday, March 24.—Eph. v., 1-21.
- Wednesday, March 25.—Isa. xxviii., 1-13.
- Thursday, March 26.—Hab. ii., 1-17.
- Friday, March 27.—Num. vi., 1-12.
- Saturday, March 28.—Jer. xxxv., 1-11.
- Sunday, March 29.—Jer. xxxv., 12-19.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Our golden text has a rather disagreeable sound about it to-day, hasn't it. Bites and stings, and serpents and adders are all disagreeable, so why are we learning about them to-day? It is much nicer to talk about nice things only, but suppose you were going along a road which you didn't know and there were terrible pits in it, as well as beautiful flowers along the way, it would be kind of someone to tell you about the dark pits wouldn't it? The Bible, you know, is God's guide for us along the road of life and so, though it tells us about the beautiful land of Heaven at the end of the road, and the happy times we can have together while here on earth, it is careful to tell us of the many dangers that lie along the way, and our lesson to-day is about one of them. What is it that the text says, bites like a serpent and stings like an adder? Yes, that is it, strong drink. Look at the first verse of our lesson, and all the uncomfortable things it tells about; woe, sorrow, contentions, wounds, red eyes—and it asks who suffers from all these. The next verse tells us that it is the drunkard who is meant, and all those of us who have seen a poor drunkard, know that this is very true. But he didn't start out by being a drunkard; he started out to have a good time to be a good sort of fellow, and it was only 'at the last' as the text says, that he came to be what he is. Suppose you could see a broad, deep, black pit open in front of you, you would be frightened and try to keep away, wouldn't you? But if the same pit were hidden and you only saw some beautiful flowers on its edges, it would be much more dangerous, because you might say, 'I don't believe there is any pit there at all, and anyhow I think I could get some of those flowers.' That is just the kind of pit that the drink habit is, and no one is too young to learn about what an awful pit it is in spite of the pleasant looking flowers on its edges.

FOR THE SENIORS.

This is a lesson that perhaps more than any other calls for co-operation between class and teacher. If once a quarter the teacher merely reiterates the arguments for and against the temperance question as illustrated by Bible verses with which all the scholars are familiar, the lesson will inevitably become a drag and a weariness. It would be well to have the scholars themselves look up points on the question to-day, and the teacher come prepared with a short account of the drink problem in Solomon's time. The mild drinks in use at that time were not comparable to those in present use for strength and evil effects, and yet the evils of the drink habit called from Solomon so strong a denunciation as his, with the total abstinence principle urged as the only safe way (verse 31). The persistence and growth of the evil

to the present day make it a foe that demands constant resistance if it is not to strangle the nations in its power. Rooted in selfishness, and pandering to the senses only, the highest argument that can be brought for its continuance is the right of man to judge for himself. But the law denies any such right where a man's actions trespass on his neighbors rights and in all cases of crime, so that a tampering with man's 'birthright of free-will' has incontestably justifiable precedents.

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE'.)

Verse 33. Thy heart shall utter perverse things. A young man of a fine family, of splendid gifts, was going down fast through strong drink. His friends had pleaded with him, but he had taken their warnings as an insult. One day one of them, who was a court stenographer, was sitting in a restaurant, when the young man came in with a companion, and took the table next to him, sitting down with his back to him without seeing him. He was just drunk enough to be talkative about his private affairs, and, on the impulse of the moment, the stenographer pulled out his note-book, and took a short-hand report of every word he said. The next morning the stenographer copied it all out, and sent it around to the young man's office. In less than ten minutes the latter came tearing in with the exclamation, 'What is this, anyhow?' 'It's a stenographic report of your monologue at the restaurant last evening,' his friend replied, and gave him a brief explanation. 'Did I really talk like that?' he asked faintly. 'I assure you 't is a verbatim report,' was the reply. He turned pale and walked out. He never drank another drop.—Herald and Presbyter.

34. As he that lieth upon the top of a mast. The text appears to be corrupt. Literally it reads: And as one sleeping (or lying) on the head—; the word left untranslated (Revised Version, mast) occurs only here in the Old Testament, and its meaning, if it be a real word, is unknown; it is similar to the term for line, rope, but can hardly mean mast (which is a mere guess). It is simpler to adopt the expression, "Like one asleep in a violent storm," which requires no great change in the Hebrew.—Toy.

Verse 32. The other end of life is coming for us all. It is only a question of time. What shall it mean to you? No one can answer for you. Decide now, absolutely, changelessly, at any cost, that you will be the Lord's follower, industrious, clean, self-controlled, useful, victorious. It will mean a crown for you at the last. 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'—Maltbie D. Babcock, in 'Forward.'

The joys of wine, of opium, of tobacco, and of all kindred drugs are mere tricks upon the nervous system; in greater or less degree they destroy its power to tell the truth, and in proportion as they have seemed to bring subjective happiness, so do they bring at last subjective horror and disgust.—David Starr Jordan.

Some one has said that if it is a small sacrifice to give up wine one should do it for the sake of others, but if it is a great sacrifice, one should do it for one's own sake.

The contemplation of vice is vice.—Arabic Saying.

Drink is Death's Prime Minister.—Addison.

Far from me be the gift of Bacchus—pernicious, inflaming wine, that weakens both body and mind.—Homer.

(FROM PELOUBET'S 'NOTES'.)

'The best temperance lecture I have delivered lately was my offer of ten percent premium on their wages to all the employees on my Scottish estates who will abstain from intoxicating liquors.'—Andrew Carnegie, in 'Advantage,' 1902.

While a member of Congress, Abraham Lincoln was once criticized by a friend for his seeming rudeness in declining to test the rare wines provided by their host. 'I meant no disrespect, John,' answered Lincoln, 'but I promised my precious mother, only a few

days before she died, that I would never use anything intoxicating as a beverage, and I consider that promise as binding to-day as it was the day I gave it.'

A business man gives this testimony. 'Twenty-five years ago I knew every man, woman, and child in the city I lived in. And it has been a study with me to mark boys who started in every grade of life with myself, to see what has become of them. I was up last fall and began to count them over, and it was an instructive exhibit. Some of them became clerks, merchants, manufacturers, lawyers, doctors. It is remarkable that every one of those that drank is dead; not one living of my age. Barring a few that were taken off by sickness, every one that proved a wreck and wrecked his family did it from rum, and no other cause. Of those who are church-going people, who were steady, industrious, and hard-working men, who were frugal and thrifty, every single one of them, without an exception, owns the house in which he lives, and has something laid by, the interest on which, with his house, would carry him through many a rainy day.'

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, March 29. Topic—Home missions: progress in the Philippines. Matt. xiii., 31-33.

C. E. Topic.

- Monday, March 23.—Abstain from evil. 1. Thess. v., 21, 22.
- Tuesday, March 24.—Be not self-confident. I. Cor. x., 12.
- Wednesday, March 25.—Watch therefore. Matt. xxiv., 42.
- Thursday, March 26.—Lest ye forget. Deut. iv., 9.
- Friday, March 27.—Watch and be sober. 1. Thess. v., 6.
- Saturday, March 28.—Always watching. Luke xii., 42-46.
- Sunday, March 29.—Topic—Take heed to yourselves. Luke xxi., 34.

The Delinquents.

Perhaps not enough attention is given to the scholars who drop out of our Sabbath schools. There is an enthusiasm about the work of getting new scholars, but it is the ordinary humdrum of work to keep them after they have been gotten. Our schools need to adapt to their work the old adage, 'A penny saved is a penny earned.' And that kindred homely old saw, 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.' It may be that the wanderer is the product of a start for thorough systematic work in your community. A few were brought in by the House-to-house Committee. They showed interest for a few Sabbaths, or as long as the novelty lasted and the new was on; but later they went back, and the teacher showed but little interest in getting them into the class again. There is an entire volume on soul-winning packed away in the one living sentence, 'He went after until he found it.' 'You will bear in mind that the words 'lost' and 'found' in the Bible have a meaning of greatest depth. To go after until one finds means to keep going until the effort ends in putting the soul of the scholar down at the feet of Jesus Christ. The trouble with most of our Sabbath School is 'we slump too soon.' Let us look up the rolls of our classes, and go after the delinquents until we 'find them.'—Christian Guardian.

Don't do all the Talking.

The boys and the girls should be given an opportunity to recite, and encouraged to know the answers to every question. No day school teacher would pass a lesson without clinching the important facts in it; and how much more essential is it that children should have their minds stored with the truths of the Bible. Just try it yourself some day. Carefully prepare your lesson, and then get into a class where the teacher does all the talking. You will declare that you never want to go back, but you will have more patience with the restless boys and girls afterwards.—S. S. Times.