

"sign" that the true Church of God would seek to throw out in front of every liquor shop, gambling house, and den of iniquity. Abstain from every appearance of evil. Touch not the unclean thing. Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. But if you find that you have already made a mistake, then take not one step more; stop at once; **turn from it, and pass away.**

16. They sleep not except they have done mischief. The old-fashioned "wicked" whom Solomon had in mind lay awake nights thinking whom they could next knock down and rob. Even to-day there live some of that sort. But there are others (and it is perfectly proper in a temperance lesson to specify them) who often sit up to plan how to make weak men break temperance pledges and how to decoy ignorant boys and girls into ruin. True, no such text as this is to be narrowed in its application to the liquor evil. It refers to the whole breadth of sin; and there are some very innocent businesses which are prosecuted in a very guilty manner. But perhaps there is no class of men in modern life who come nearer to being fitly described by verse 16 than the liquor dealers.

17. They eat the bread of wickedness and

drink the wine of violence. Sitting down at table, where instead of bread and meat they devour plans of malicious mischief and instead of drink they swallow plans of cruelty and swindling.

18. The path of the just. The manner of life of the man who seeks to conform to the rules of God. **The shining light.** The rising sun. **Shineth more and more unto the perfect day.** Every morning in its brightness is a figure of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the world. Let us walk in that Light. Candles do not shine more and more; they burn down to the socket. Lamps do not shine more and more; their oil goes out. Meteors do not shine more and more; earth's atmosphere soon submerges them. But the sun of the morning shineth more and more unto the perfect day. So it is with the Light of the world and the path of the just on which its glory is shed.

19. The way of the wicked is as darkness. Midnight gloom. **They know not at what they stumble.** Ordinarily they cannot see that their own misdeeds lead them to downfall. But some of them do see it, but do not know how to get rid of the tendency to evil. The way to do so is to "come to Jesus," and "walk in the light."

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

Solomon was the son of David's old age and was evidently a favorite, for he says, "I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother." He was educated with the utmost care, having for his companion and instructor Nathan, the prophet, who gave him the name Jedidiah (the beloved of the Lord). Being much in the company of his father, Solomon received much wise and practical counsel from David, in accordance with which he attempted to fashion his own life. That the counsels of David and the instruction of Nathan were sound is seen from the fact that Solomon admonishes his own children and enforces his exhortation with the authority of David. These words of Solomon have value to-day not only because they represent the final conclusions of one of the world's wisest men concerning certain fundamental things in practical ethics, but because conditions in morals and in human nature have not changed much since Solomon's day, and the advice needed then is needed quite as much, if not more, now. When a wise man speaks all should listen and give heed to him.

Verse 10. Hear, my son. Solomon is quoting the "sayings" that he received from his father, David. Henry remarks that "though Solomon was a wise man himself and divinely

inspired, yet, when he was to teach wisdom, he did not think it below him to quote his father and make use of his words." This suggests that every parent is under obligation to give the best and wisest instruction, both by precept and example, to his children. **Years.** He who hears the instruction and receives the sayings of this king gives evidence of that wisdom of which it is said, "Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor."

11. Way of wisdom. Wisdom is personified frequently by Solomon, and "her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." **I have led thee.** Referring to the unusual care taken by David in the training of his son Solomon, not only through the instruction received from Nathan, the prophet, but through the helpful example of David's own life, which during Solomon's childhood and boyhood was free from the unfortunate blemishes of earlier years.

12. When thou goest. Whoever puts into practice these precepts is sure to be untrammelled, whether in the ordinary or unusual affairs of life. They are calculated to develop the best qualities of the mind and heart, and to keep all the baser qualities in subjection. So there need be no fear of being "straitened" nor of stum-