

did I give up to become a follower of Christ; and what did I acquire when I took the new stand on the Lord's side? One is balanced against the other, and a conclusion is reached in Paul's immortal words: "I count all things but loss . . ." If we have not all reached the same conclusion there is something wrong with our religious experience. Arrange for two ten-minute talks: 1. What did I give up for Christ? 2. What did I gain from Christ? It would make an impressive lesson to put on the blackboard in order, the losses, and opposite the gains. Then, study the object lesson for a time, and strike a balance.

SEPT. 10.—"TEMPERANCE MEETING,"

James 1, 12-14

A good temperance lesson is impressed when we learn that intemperance in any form is the result of our own choice. Temptation to over-indulgence may be presented to any one, but to be tempted is not to sin. Sin comes when a choice is made of the wrong, and the choice followed. But someone says, here is a drunkard who has no control of his appetite; it is not a matter of choice with him, for he has lost the power to refuse. Well, that unfortunate creature has reached that lamented condition by a series of choices. He consented by choice to the first glass, and to the second, and to all the others, until now, he has lost the power of choice. Who is responsible? He was drawn away by his own lust and enticed. . . . lust brought forth sin; and sin brought forth death—the death of the moral will.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF INTEMPERANCE.

The foolishness of intemperance in strong drink lies in this—strong drink creates an appetite for itself, and at the same time results in a weakening of the will power to resist. This goes on until the unhappy drunkard is a slave, without the power of refusal and on the downward path to ruin. What man in his senses would pursue such a course that in all likelihood ends in such fearful results. Lately, the liquor men have come out in the public press in favor of temperance. This is like Satan condemning sin. A bar-room advocating temperance! What next? It is easy to see the reason for this change of front on the part of the liquor trade. The trade is becoming disreputable—drunkards are being made by the wholesale. Now, says Mr. Beer-keg, don't drink so much, be moderate, stop when you feel good, don't get drunk. This is the most dangerous kind of advice and shows what tactics the bar-room advocates will resort to advance their interest. . . . "I can drink and leave it alone" man will ere long find himself confessing that he drinks and can't leave it alone. He has become a drunkard. What's the remedy? Use the God-given power of choice to refuse the first glass, and there will be no other but the first to refuse. That's the remedy.

"There is a little public house,
That every one can close;
It is the little public house
Just underneath the nose."

THE POSITION OF JAMES.

Let us study a little more closely the position James takes in the topic Scripture. Temptation as enticement would seem, at first sight, to be altogether and only evil. Yet, in view of the sinful condition of man, and the redemptive work to be done in him, even temptation in this sense may prove to be of value, and the man is strengthened who comes into power of it, but stands fast, and effectively resists. The man gains a moral uplift who has come safely through such temptations. The moral dignity of Christ is manifested in this, that he was

tempted and did endure. Temptation to evil applied to moral beings is an essential condition of moral culture, and now can moral culture be accomplished in any other way? The untempted have no virtue. The impossi- bility of solicitation to evil renders moral character impossible. To be tempted and refuse, that is virtue.

The question arises now, Whence comes temptation to evil?

1. Not a great evil spirit. James in his discussion of the subject does not attribute temptation to evil to great evil spirit. He wants us to feel that the responsibility in the matter rests with ourselves, and therefore he avoids the bare possibility of their shifting the responsibility on Satan. Both the question of the existence and work of a personal devil need not be introduced, as James puts it away from consideration. Satan is no power equal with God. He is a strictly subordinate power working within the divine restraints. He may be foiled and overcome every time by the grave given unto us.

2. Not from God. James declares that God is never the direct source of temptation. He says he cannot be, because he himself cannot be tempted with evil. Satan, who was tempted and fell, is the tempter.

3. In the nature and circumstances of man, James affirms that the source of temptation is found in the nature of man, and the occasion of temptation in the circumstances of man. "Drawn away by his own lust and enticed." Man craves for pleasure, and is entrusted with his sires. It is his nature to want what will please and gratify him. In this of itself there would have been no difficulty, but the gratification of desires, there would have been no character and no possible creation of character. There came a revelation of God's will to man, which required that he should put his desires under restraint. If he would not sin, he sinned. In assisting his self-will against the will of God he changed his desires into lusts; put himself to the power of these lusts, which drew him aside to evil. The eternal world of things being set in relation to his bodily nature became the occasion of temptation. But if a man be in Christ, he is a new creature, and need not yield either to his evil nature nor to the events or circumstances of his life. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

4. Consequences of yielding inevitable. The consequences of yielding to temptation no one can escape. These results come in the ordinary and necessary outworking of moral laws, and are as certain as any results of the outworking is allowed a free hand, it will bring forth sin. Let sin do its work, and it will bring forth death—moral and spiritual death. The only possible arrest of the process is in man's own hands, with the divine help. It lies in gaining that self-mastery through Christ which God is ever helping those to gain who commit themselves to him.

POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

This is a temperance meeting, but conduct it according to the main idea of the topic Scripture—"Choice and its Consequences." Choice has everything to do with a temperate life in whatever way you regard it. People do not regard the sovereignty of the human will high enough. The will is the whole man in his executive capacity, and as is the will, so is the man. How essential that the will should be regenerated by divine grace, so it will spontaneously do God's bidding!

Put this topic in the care of the Missionary Committee, asking them to make the best possible plans for its presentation.

As Others See Us

Rev. Dr. Gilbert, Editor of The Western Christian Advocate, has the following interesting account of his recent visit to Toronto in his paper:

The city of Toronto makes an excellent impression upon the stranger from the very start. We arrived by the Grand Trunk, and on the cars were a number of delegates who sang gospel hymns intermittently with the boys from the Bishop Ridley School, who were giving their yells and cheering the stranger. The Grand Depot is a massive structure, and indeed the whole city seems like English cities in general, built not hastily, but with solidity, and with a purpose to endure. Brick and stone are almost exclusively used in the erection of private and public buildings, of which there are some fifty thousand.

The meetings of the convention were mostly held in Massey Hall, a plain but enormous structure, which will accommodate some 4,500 people. It was given to the city by the Methodist trustees after whom it was named. It was our privilege to meet his widow and his daughter, the latter having recently presented to the Central Methodist Church two organs, placed at opposite ends of the church for antiphonal music. This arrangement is quite common in the churches, and gives an excellent effect. The music in all the churches was very artistic and striking in volume and execution. The chorus of some three hundred voices at Massey Hall elicited spontaneous applause at every service.

It is surprising to a stranger to see how many people go to church in Toronto. It is said that the church population and that of the city are almost identical. Until late years no street-cars were allowed to pass the Sunday school in the whole city there are but one hundred and fifty licensed bars where liquors are sold. All the churches were filled to their utmost capacity with worshippers. Such a city makes a striking contrast with those with which most Americans are familiar. The churches themselves, and the numerous cathedrals, are imposing specimens of architecture in brick and stone.

Several meetings were held in the great Metropolitan Church (Methodist), which is the pride of the city. It stands, with its noble tower, in a great square of the city, and its architecture, early Norman French, is both ornamental and impressive.

We stayed pretty closely by the convention and allowed ourselves comparatively little time for sight-seeing. But even a rapid survey of the city will strike the visitor with the beauty of such streets as Jarvis and Queen's Park Avenue.

From the top of the lofty square tower of the magnificent City Hall one gets a view of the entire city and harbor. The post-office, the Public Library, the "insurance companies' buildings" and all the massive structures. The Parliament Building, facing the beautiful Queen's Park, is worthy of the Dominion. In the park stand statues of Queen Victoria, Sir John Macdonald, Hon. George Brown (former leader of the Liberal party in Canada); there is also a monument erected to the memory of the volunteers who fell in the Fenian uprising of 1866. We have rarely seen an education plant whose grounds and buildings exceed that of Toronto University. In addition are a number of colleges, including the Victoria University of the Methodist Church, and several theological schools of different denominations. The entire group of buildings makes a whole which will compare with anything we have in America, not excluding Yale, Harvard, Chicago, or Leland Stanford. Toronto could itself in hospitality, and everyone left feeling that it had been a joy and an inspiration to be for a few days in contact with its people.