

tense until it reaches the splendor and glory of high noon. The life of the just begins in the light of penitent obedience, continues in service until in the end it enters the inaccessible glory of heaven. See 2 Sam. 23:4.

The way of the wicked is in the opposite direction. It begins in the darkness of ignorance, error, and sin, continues in its course of danger, till it ends in the outer darkness, "the blackness and darkness forever." The result of evil is that men confound evil with good. It blinds the eyes, confuses the mind, and destroys the soul.

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

The years of thy life—literally *lives*. Fullness of life implies that body, soul, and spirit, always exercise all their functions to the full. What years of enjoyment, of power, of work, are taken from the body's life through violation of the divine laws of health. Life is made poor, empty, and painful by transgression.

Let us remember that there is a sin against the body and God will hold us to account for it.

Neglect of development of the mind, of laying up stores of knowledge in youth when the memory is retentive, of forming habits of correct thinking and profitable reading, takes largely from the sum total of our mental life. It involves a loss of years.

We only begin truly to live when we have learned the fear of the Lord, and the wisdom which comes down from above. When we remember the low plane on which the child of God lives even at his best, how much of joy, of fellowship with God, of service for him, are abstracted from life. What years are taken from the soul's life. Heaven is the place where all our powers are employed to the full in that which is best. There labor is never in vain.

Wisdom begins with knowing God as Creator, Governor, Provider, Father, and that as His children, made in His image, we must trust Him, live for Him in the assurance that we shall be fitted to live with Him. This knowledge of God can only come to us through Jesus Christ, "Who made unto us wisdom." His spirit alone can teach us and lead us into wisdom.

Hold fast.—The only way to keep what we

have is to cultivate it, add to it, use it for our own advancement and the good of others.

Truth is not a crystal which can be laid up in the cabinet of the mind to remain unchanging through life. It is a seed, and will lose vitality unless it is made to grow, and reproduce itself more largely in our own life and that of others. Truth held in the mind as a mere formula, no matter how beautifully and comprehensively expressed is a dead thing and will crumble to dust. It must enter into the life and practice if it is to abide.

Use your knowledge if you would keep it. It is easier to begin well than to hold on our way amid discouragement and difficulties. Hold fast, and hold forth the truth.

Avoid the beginnings of evil.—The germs of evil are in us, and it does not take much fostering to raise them into vigorous life. There are latent appetites which may be easily awakened. We are heirs of a past family history, and the habits of a past ancestor may show themselves in us with intense power.

I remember a young lad of fifteen years one of the brightest boys I ever met, who told me that as far back as he could remember the sight or smell of strong drink awakened in him a keen desire to take it. The temptation was all but irresistible. His father had all his life been a total abstainer, but his grandfather had been given to drink. The one hope of such a boy is never to learn the taste of strong drink. What example can his Sabbath School teacher set before such a boy? Must it be that of a total abstainer or moderate drinker? The only example we dare set to such—and who knows what boy has the passion for drink asleep in him—is that of total abstinence.

Evil loves company.—One sin leads to another, and one bad habit is not long contented alone. The drinking habit especially loves companions. It loves the companionship of other sins, and of other people that indulge in the same sin. Examine its effect on its victim if you would see the danger of tampering with it.

The first effect of intoxicating liquor is upon the moral nature. It begins its deadening effect thereby confusing the moral sense. Read the story of Esther, The king's heart was merry with wine and he commanded Vashti to appear unveiled, putting her to shame before his companions. Esther 1: 11.