

character of the Christian becomes riper, more perfect, and more rugged as evil is resisted and overthrown. The converse is also true. Temptation yielded to, will undermine and ruin the fairest life and bring inevitable disaster. How important it is that we be overcoming Christians.

#### HOW TO MEET TEMPTATION.

Watchfulness—"Watch lest ye enter into temptation." Matt. 27. 41. Do not wait until the temptation strikes you, but get ready for it, and be on the lookout, just as the sailor prepares for the storm by getting his ship in shape. Nothing is more foolish than the attempt that is constantly made to get as near sin as possible without falling into it. Keep a good safe distance between yourself and evil. Watch especially against weak hours.

Prayer—"And pray." Matt. 27. 41. It is difficult for the tempter to accomplish anything when he finds his subject living in an atmosphere of prayer. He who is most earnest on his knees will be most earnest in his life work.

Study the Scriptures—God's word is a storehouse of excellent weapons for our warfare. Jesus met the tempter by saying, "It is written." The adversary has no device which the Scripture does not tell us how to meet and defeat. Every Christian is a swordsman, and God's word is His sword. Learn its use, its skillful use.

Be Warned by past errors and failures. They ought to admonish us. One fall always prepares the way for another, unless God's grace interposes and teaches us wisdom. Prevention is better than cure. There is many a man who can keep away from places of temptation who certainly will fall if he ventures into them.

Hate the Sin—"Abhor that which is evil. (Rom. 12. 9.) The only barrier that will stand against temptation is hatred of the sin. Cease desiring it. Cease thinking about it.

Resistance—"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation." (Jas. 1. 12.) "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Stern, uncompromising resistance to every suggestion of evil is the great secret of success. The power of the will must be exercised in meeting every approach of the enemy.

Help From Above—"I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." The exercise of the will is not enough. It must be allied to the grace and help of Jesus Christ, which is so freely offered to all.

#### SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS.

Temptation belongs to the schedule of life, and no man can altogether avoid it.

To avoid the worst, keep clear of the bad.

If one sin does not have power over every man there is some sin that can excite every heart to a greater or less degree.

The Abrahams and Josephs who successfully resisted temptation, shall receive the brightest crown in heaven.

If the door is kept barred the enemy cannot enter in.

When you allow the devil to come close to you, you are always thrown. Resist him at a distance.

The sentinel who stands on the wall of the fort is not to go to sleep, and allow the enemy to advance until it is too late to repel him; he is put there that he may give timely alarm.

By patient waiting and determined fighting the strongest temptation may be overcome.

There is only one unconquerable sin, and that is the sin you are not trying to conquer.

The sin is not in the deed, but in the mind, and while your mind hates the deed, and tries to flee from it, do not dare to think yourself wholly lost.

Though ten thousand times, after sinning, you have sworn, "That shall be the last," swear it after the ten thousand and first.

Our course in the unconquerable will! Do not for a moment acquiesce in defeat! Do not for a moment say of your sin, "It has become myself!" Hold it aloof in your clinched hands. Have no expectation, but of the day when you will be free of it.

Nay, assert your instant freedom from it. Do not postpone your emancipation. Let now be your day of salvation. It may be never unless it is now. And it can be now.

#### QUOTATIONS.

Ye young men and women, whose hearts throb in warm sympathy with "the true, the beautiful, and the good," and whose aim it is to embody in your life the high moral aspirations of your soul; let me assure you that those who may endeavor from time to time to shame you out of your virtue by ridicule, or to win you from it by blandishments, have an inward reverence for all the good they discover in your character.—Dr. David Thomas.

To speak of irresistible temptation involves inextricable difficulties. If a temptation be possibly irresistible, man's responsibility ceases. Sin is the transgression of the law, and whenever we have been tempted to do the wrong, we have always had the power, the strength, the ability to say no."

Think not that something new or strange has befallen you, even when the fiery darts fly most thickly. No temptation now befalls the people of God, but such as are common to the saints of all ages. A trial may be new to you, but other men have had the same and have triumphed over it. What has been done can be done again.—W. S. Plumer, D.D.

"There is not a place beneath which the believer walks that is free from snares. Behind every tree there is the Indian with his barbed arrow; behind every bush there is a lion seeking to devour; under every piece of grass there lieth the adder. Everywhere they are."

No man ought to want to be sent where the artillery and musketry sweep, but if it be needful, and if the commander says "Go," then every man must commit himself to God and go.—Beecher.

For every tear we shall have a diamond; for every bitter cross a golden crown; for every sigh, a shout of joy; and an eternity of blessedness for a hand's-breadth of schooling.—Beecher.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS.

If you had your pockets full of gunpowder would you go where sparks were flying all around you? If you did with your eyes wide open, people would say, when your head went one way and your feet another: "Served him right, why did he not keep away from the fire when he knew he had gunpowder in his pocket?"

As the chameleon, when he lies on the grass to catch flies and grasshoppers, takes the color of the grass, so the devil turns himself into that shape which we least fear, and sets before us those objects of temptation which are most agreeable to us.

John Bunyan once said that he was tempted to sell Christ. If he stooped to

pick up a pin the voice said, "Sell him for that." And men will sell themselves for things as cheap. Sometimes a glass of wine will do it. For a contemptible bribe a man will sell his honor. For the pleasure of a moment a man will injure his soul for all eternity.

There is a lesson of tact to be learned from the old legend. A saint was harassed all day long at his work by the mocking face of the devil. At last it became unbearable, and one day, as the saint was busy at the forge, with his tongs thrust into the glowing fire, and the hateful sneering face before him, he suddenly snatched the white-hot tongs from the glowing coals and in a moment had the devil by the nose. This changed the position of affairs in that forge. It was no longer a question whether the saint would be allowed to pursue his work in peace, but whether the howling fiend at the other end of the tongs could by any means get away from the saint. Translate the legend into the language of to-day, and it expresses a mighty spiritual fact. Temptation is not conquered by whining about the weakness of the flesh and then yielding. Often the surest way to gain a victory is to flank the enemy, and to change his position from the assailing party to that of the assailed.

A man says, "I wish I could be set free from sin," and to-morrow he will mix with gay associates and loose companions, and go to places of amusement where he is sure to be led into sin as he is sure that his coat will burn if he put it into the fire.

#### SUGGESTIONS TO THE LEADER.

This is a most practical topic, and ought to be very helpful to all. It will be a good plan to divide the subject and have several very brief talks on "The nature of temptation," "How to overcome temptation," "The joy of victory," etc. One member could be assigned to gather all the text of Scripture that bring a message of cheer to tempted ones, or each member might be asked to bring one such text to the meeting.

The suggestions, quotations, and illustrations given above are simply so much ammunition. Each leader should load the gun and fire it in his own way.

#### JAN. 27.—"MISSIONARY MEETING."

Subject—"The Methodist Missionary Society, Constitution and Policy."

SUGGESTED PROGRAMME.  
(Canadian Hymnal used).

Hymn 356.

Prayer—For the Mission Board and for those who by their prayers and gifts support the missionary work.

Reading of the Scriptures.—Psal. xvi.  
Hymn 317.

1. Address—"The object, officers, membership and work of the Missionary Society."

Discussion, or questions arising out of the address.  
Hymn 193.

2. Address—"How are the General Board of Missions and the Executive Committee elected; their duties and responsibilities."

Discussion.

3. Address—"The policy of the Missionary Society in regard to 'Special objects for support' and the development of the work through the Forward Movement for Missions."

Announce the subject for February, which is, "Our Missionary work for the Indians of Canada."