



Scientific Temperance Teaching.

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LESSON XXXIV.—OPIUM.

1. What is opium?

It is the dried juice of the poppy.

2. Where is it grown?

In many eastern countries; in Arabia, Egypt, and most of all in India, where thousands of miles are given to poppy fields.

3. How is it produced?

From the seed-vessels of the poppy, which, after the flowers are gone, are left to grow till they are as large as hens' eggs. Then they are cut with a sharp instrument in the early morning, and left for a day for the juice to flow out.

4. What is the next thing?

The following day men go through the fields and carefully scrape off the juice that has flowed out, and it is poured into pans and left for three or four weeks to dry and thicken, being carefully turned every day.

5. And what next?

Then it is packed into earthen jars and sent to the factories, where it is poured into large vats and thoroughly kneaded. Afterwards it is made into balls, and is then ready for shipment.

6. For what is it used?

Much is used as medicine. It is very useful in cases of great pain, or when severe operations have to be performed.

7. How is it useful?

Through its effect on the nerves, which it puts completely to sleep, so they know nothing at all of what is being done to them.

8. Is it a dangerous medicine?

Very dangerous indeed. A single grain of it killed a young lady, and a dose a little too large may destroy life at any time.

9. Is it ever used except as a medicine?

It is used in enormous quantities by the Eastern nations. Millions of dollars are spent by the Chinese, the Burmese and others, for this drug, which they use daily for smoking.

10. Is it harmful when used in this way?

It is one of the most terrible things ever used. It destroys its victims, both body and soul.

11. How does it affect the body?

Especially through the nerves. It destroys their power to control the body, makes them perfectly insensible to all impressions, and so produces very dreadful diseases.

12. How does it affect the mind and character?

Through the brain, which it deadens. It affects the conscience and the will; makes a person false, deceitful, filthy; destroys all sense of right or decency. When the effects of the opium wear off, he is cross and cruel.

13. Is it used at all in America?

Yes, and its use is growing. Many 'opium dens,' as they are called, exist in New York, and they are found also in other cities.

14. How is opium usually taken?

In these dens it is smoked through long pipes. But it is also used in great quantities in the form of morphine, which is either taken through the stomach or is injected under the skin, usually of the arm.

15. Why do people come to use it if it is so dreadful a drug?

Because they like the effects. It so quickly deadens the nerves as to take away the knowledge of fatigue or pain. And when a person once forms the habit his will power is 'snuffed out,' as a physician said.

16. Is it easy, then, to break off the opium habit?

No, it is almost impossible. The struggles of the opium user are even more terrible than those of the poor drunkard; and in many cases he cannot overcome the habit.

17. What, then, should we do?

We should be sure not to begin such a fearful habit. Boys often form it in using cigarettes, of which opium forms a part.

Hints to Teachers.

This lesson may be expanded and illustrated, and made exceedingly interesting to the children. Dwell especially on the danger

of beginning the habit. Sometimes mothers unwittingly bind it upon their children by giving them soothing syrups, etc., of which opium is always an ingredient. Especially warn the boys against the cigarette, in which opium is largely used. Girls also need careful warning, so often is the habit fixed upon them through the use of opiates or sedatives given in cases of illness. Better any pain than this body and soul destroying habit.

The Cigarette Habit.

The teacher in a public school in Chicago found that eighty of her scholars smoked from two to twenty cigarettes a day. Six only of these boys were able to do good work in their classes. The victims of the cigarette habit confessed that they were suffering constantly from headache, drowsiness and dizziness.

Many declared they could not write well because their hands trembled. A number were 'shaky' when they walked, and unable to run for a distance. They could not rouse themselves to meet the examination test. The teacher reported that they were sure to fail if asked to memorize anything. Several of the smokers were from four to five years too old for their grade, and it was found that after they began to smoke their progress ceased.

Except in three instances, the scholars hardest to discipline were smokers. Truancy and theft were directly traced to indulgence in the habit. Boys who had reformed and joined the Anti-Cigarette Society said they 'felt like different boys.' The power and perniciousness of the cigarette habit are revealed by this fresh testimony from a competent and careful observer.—The Youth's Companion.

A Touching Incident.

The quiet influence of a child has been the means of saving the parent. I remember a little history related to me many years ago by a Christian abstainer. He said he would give me the facts that led to his reform, and the circumstance that arrested him in his career of sin.

Two maiden ladies who lived in the village, often noticed a scantily-clad girl passing their house with a tin pail. On one occasion one of the ladies accosted her:

'Little girl, what have you got in that pail?'

'Whiskey, ma'am.'

'Where do you live?'

'Down in the hollow.'

'I'll go home with you.'

They soon came to a wretched hovel in the hollow, outside the village. A pale, jaded, worn-out woman, met them at the door. Inside was a man, dirty, maudlin, and offensive. The lady addressing the woman, said:

'Is this your little girl?'

'Yes.'

'Does she go to school?'

'No; she has no other clothes than what you see.'

'Does she go to Sunday-school?'

'Sunday-school!—in these rags! Oh, no! If I furnish her with suitable clothes, can she go?'

'It is no use giving her clothes. He would steal them and sell them for whiskey. Better let the girl alone, there is no hope for her, or for us.'

'But she ought to go to school.'

An arrangement was entered into whereby the child should call at the lady's house on Sunday morning, be clothed for the school, and after school was dismissed, call again, and change her clothes for home.

The little creature was very teachable, and soon became a favorite with the teacher, who gave her a little Testament—probably the first gift the child had ever received. She was very proud of her Testament, exhibiting it on all occasions, with the delighted exclamation:

'That's my little Testament—my own!'

She would take it with her at night, clasping it in her hands till she fell asleep on the wretched rags called a bed.

The child was taken ill. The doctor provided by her benefactors declared she would die. Her friends furnished her with what comforts they could, and watched the father lest he should steal them and sell them for whiskey.

The gentleman then continued the narrative in the first person:

'One day I went to her bedside. I was

mad for drink. I had taken everything I could lay my hands on. I looked around the room. There was nothing left, nothing I could dispose of. Yet I must have drink. I would have sold my child; I would have sold myself, for whiskey. The little creature lay on the bed, with the Testament clasped in her hand, partly dozing. As I sat there she fell asleep, and the book slipped from her fingers, and lay on the coverlid of the bed. Stealthily looking round the room, I stretched out my shaking hand, seized the Testament, and hastily thrust it into my bosom. I soon sneaked out, like a guilty thing, to the grog-shop. All I could get for it was half a pint of whiskey. It was a poor little book. I drank the devil's drink almost at a draught, and soon felt relieved from the burning thirst. The stagnant blood in the diseased vessels of my stomach was stimulated by the fiery fluid, and I felt better. What took me back to my child, I can not tell, but I sat again by her side. She still seemed to be sleeping; and I sat there with the horrible craving stayed for the time by the whiskey I had drunk, when she opened her eyes slowly and saw me. Reaching out her hand to touch mine, she said:

'Papa, listen. I am going to die, and when I die I am going to Jesus; for he told little children to come to him. And I shall go to heaven; for he said that little children were of the kingdom of heaven. I learned that out of my Testament. Papa, suppose when I go to heaven, Jesus should ask me what you did with my little Testament. Oh, papa! oh, papa! what shall I tell him?'

'It struck me like lightning. I sat a few moments, and then fell down on my knees at the bedside of my child, crying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." That half-pint of whiskey was the last drop of intoxicating liquor that has passed my lips. She died in a few days, with her hand in mine, and her last words to me were:

'Papa, we shall both go to Jesus now.'—From John B. Gough's 'Sunlight and Shadow.'

Beer and Brick.

At one place in England, where a large amount of brick-making is carried on, and where the amount of each man's work, the number of days lost by sickness or otherwise, and the deaths, were made matters of record, the rules of the service allowed to every man a mug of beer at each meal. But there were among the workmen quite a number who wholly abstained from the use of beer, and every other intoxicating drink. An examination of the record showed that the average amount of work done per annum by the beer drinkers was a large percentage less than that done by those who wholly abstained, while the number of days lost by sickness was greater.—British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review.

Wisdom From the Far East.

The Japanese say:

'First time, man drinks wine; second, wine drinks man; third time, wine drinks man.'

The Chinese say:

'Intoxication is not the wine's fault, but the man's.'

'Let those who desire to leave off drinking observe when sober a drunken man.'

'Medicine may heal imaginary sickness, but wine will never dispel sorrow.'

—'Christian.'

Deny yourself for the sake of others. It is better to deny yourself meat, or wine, or any other thing by the use of which you would make your brother do wrong. Stand squarely on your own faith in God. Don't insist that your brethren shall test their faith by the same conditions by which you test yours, and don't measure your faith by the conditions which they set up. You are fortunate if all your habits stand approved by your own conscience. But if you are in doubt as to the righteousness of any of these habits, you are doing wrong to practice them. Whatever you do as a Christian you must do it to the glory of God. So doing others have no right to judge you, and you have no right to judge others. You may safely and contentedly commit yourself and them to him before whose judgment seat we all must stand and give an account of ourselves.—Dr. Dunning.