

IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING TEMPERANCE PRINCIPLES TO THE CHILDREN IN OUR HOMES AND IN OUR SABBATH SCHOOLS.

How many homes of good people, good in reputation, in the church, in the community have been ruined by this curse gradually creeping in, where children dread the return of their parents home. These children have rights, even little children, rights which all grown people are bound to respect; they are entitled to food, clothing, home, education, according to the circumstances of their parents. They also have a right to expect affection and a tender regard on the part of the parent. How often will the drunkard inflict wrongs upon the sensitive nature of his child, wounds which are deep and almost indelible. Sometimes a drunken father, who really loves his child will act almost unconsciously the part of a tyrant over it—he may break down the self-respect of his children by his sneers and sarcasms, which pierce the youthful heart like sharp arrows; the child is helpless before the stern face, the loud voice, the strong will, and can only suffer and submit. He may hear his own conduct misrepresented and his honest efforts ridiculed and see his cherished hopes and wishes set aside without reason, and without consideration; and why this neglect? Intemperance in the home. A little boy who thoroughly understood his pledge ran home, delighted, to tell his fashionable Mamma, about his promising to abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks, but the child was laughed at. (The deceiver was always on the table, and as small as the boy was he knew, what was wrong.) To the mother the matter was of no importance, but to that child, it was no trifle, his mind was not relieved by telling him his pledge was of no account, and the realities of life were to him a long way ahead. (This boy is one of our Band of Hope.) Does not simple justice require that even when built on trifles, which we think we have outgrown, the happiness of the child shall not be assailed without a good reason. If the pledge is to be laughed at, explain each clause and what can be said? Is it right to snatch without a reason a feather, a straw, from the hand of a child who has just recovered the treasure, and is intently studying it? Is it right to cover a boy with shame and confusion by some unexpected and unnecessary retort in regard to his ignorance or want of judgment in signing the pledge? If courageous and resolute the boy will fight the battle the best he is able, if timid he meekly submits. The drunken father and mother will soon become fixed in his or her habits and have a rough passage through life. Oh, Heavenly Father, look down in mercy upon the once christian families where there were Bibles and family prayers, but now the beautiful unity of the family circle is broken never to be restored.

What are the Sabbath Schools doing to save the young from the curse of intemperance? We must admit that they are not doing all that they should or might do, in the way of instructing and training its youth in temperance principles and practices. Thousands of the young in the school and within reach of her influence have gone astray. The duty presses on parents, teachers, and pastors to guard and save the young from the snares which are laid for them and against those who would destroy them. To whose fault can it be laid if the young are not warned and forwarned against the assiduous approaches of intemperance. I suppose it is for lack of time and pressure of Sabbath School matters that it is often neglected.

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