

Messenger and Visitor

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More Instruction Needed.

We believe that very much less is being done than should be done to educate the people of this country in respect to the evils of liquor drinking and to establish them in the principle and practice of total abstinence. Time was when a great deal of wholesome argument was expended in that direction and a vast deal of good was thereby accomplished. But how comparatively little is being attempted in that line of effort today. It appears to be taken for granted that the people are generally sufficiently informed on this subject, that they very well understand what is their own and their neighbors' interest in reference to the use of intoxicating liquors and that their duty in the matter is quite clear to them. The result is that when temperance sermons are preached, which we fear is with no great frequency, and when addresses are delivered at temperance meetings or conventions, the subject is dealt with largely, if not exclusively, in reference to its legal aspects. Denunciations are hurled against the liquor trade, the liquor dealers, the politicians and any others who are believed to lend countenance to the evil business, and immediate prohibition is vehemently demanded. This is well enough in itself. The business is no doubt bad enough to justify the most vigorous denunciation. The right and logical way for governments, whether state or municipal, to deal with the evil is not to assume responsibility for it by taxing, regulating and licensing it, but to disown and abolish it as an evil thing, which, with constant and tremendous influence, makes against the best interest of the community and the state. But it must be considered that the traffic in liquor exists because there is a demand for it and the demand for it exists at least partly because there are so many men who have never considered the subject intelligently, and consequently, have never understood how disastrous to the material interests of the country and inimical to human happiness and well-being the liquor business is. The effective enforcement of a law prohibitive of the liquor traffic in any town or country must depend very largely upon the proportion of the people who are intellectually and morally in sympathy with the law and the more positively they are in sympathy with the law the stronger will be the probability of its being enforced.

If, therefore, we desire and expect to have an effective prohibitory law, there should be no slacking of our hands in the work of temperance education. The endeavor to secure legal prohibition should go hand in hand with the effort to create and maintain a strong and positive public sentiment in favor of such legislation. And to this end there is needed instruction, line upon line and precept upon precept, as to the effects of the traffic both upon the material interests of the country, upon its physical and moral manhood and upon the happiness, present and to come, of those who are more immediately the victims of strong drink. The most hopeful sphere of education in this matter, as in others, is found among the young, the boys and girls now in the public schools. Something, not a little, we believe, is being accomplished through the instruction now being given in our schools on this subject, and much more, no doubt, could be accomplished along the same line. The essential thing is to give right instruction and to give it thoroughly, not merely to touch the feelings and obtain a pledge. The boy who has been instructed as to properties of alcohol and its effects upon the human system, who has been led intelligently to trace the liquor business through its whole course from the time the whole-

some grain is cast into the brewer's vat until the products of the brewery and distillery find their way through the hands of the dram-seller to the lips of the drinkers, who has been caused to see what the liquor business costs the country in the waste and destruction of material wealth, in the degradation of manhood and in the desolation of homes, that boy, we take it, is not likely to become a slave to drink, but is likely rather to become an intelligent and forceful worker for temperance reform. Much can be accomplished in the way of education among those of more mature years as well as among the children, and unquestionably much must be done in this direction, if prohibition is to become more than a delusive dream, and if the cause of temperance reform is to be established on sure and lasting foundations.

The War In Europe.

During the past week Greek and Turkish forces have been fiercely contending along the line of their common frontier in Epirus, Macedonia and Thessaly. It seems impossible from the reports which reach us to gain any very clear idea of what is taking place or to give anything like a trustworthy estimate of results thus far to the contending forces, or to say with which side the principal advantage rests. Most of the fighting so far has been upon the Turkish side of the boundary. In some engagements the fighting has been of a very fierce and obstinate character, and the number of the slain is large. The Greeks apparently have fully apprehended the importance of their cause of winning success at the outset and have shown great spirit and determination, while the Turks have fought with their wonted reckless and indomitable courage. At last reports the Turks are forcing their way southward across the south-eastern border and threatening the city of Larissa, if it is not already in their possession. The Greeks on the other hand appear to be gaining some advantages on the western side of the country. Their warships have been brought into effective action at Santi Quaranti and the Turkish commander has been embarrassed by the destruction of large quantities of supplies which he had stored at that place. It is reported that battalions of Albanians connected with the Turkish army in Epirus have mutinied and deserted to the Greeks. This, if true, may indicate a general insurrection of the Albanians. The Bulgarian government is said to be resolved on an independent position in regard to the war, virtually refusing to lend any assistance to Turkey of which nominally it is a dependency. There is always to be considered the possibility that the semi-independent Turkish provinces in Europe may unite their forces with Greece in a grand struggle for complete independence; but this cannot be regarded at present as more than a mere contingency. Mr. Gladstone has again been writing letters with the purpose apparently of stirring up public sentiment in favor of Greece and against the policy of the Powers. "It is an incredible shame," says Mr. Gladstone, "that the incomparable bungling of the Powers and sacrifices of honor, decency and humanity in order to preserve peace, have caused war."

The latest reports received confirm the rumor that Larissa, which formed the base of operations for the Greek army in Thessaly, has been taken by the Turks after a hard battle. The Greeks fought bravely but were unable to resist the power of the enemy and were compelled to fall back with heavy loss, not only of men but of guns and ammunition. The Greeks take more comfort in the report of successes gained against the Turks in Epirus, but evidently the defeat on the plain of Thessaly and the loss of Larissa is felt at Athens to be a very serious matter. A gloomy feeling prevails, and certainly the situation appears to contain little to inspire the Greeks with hope. In London it is believed probable that the present week will see the end of the war, as the Greeks will recognize the hopelessness of their position and will welcome the intervention of the Powers. It is to be hoped that this forecast may prove correct.

The First Foreign Missionaries and Their Successors.

Our studies in the book of Acts in connection with the Sunday School lessons of the year afford frequent occasion to observe the expansive power of Christianity. The Kingdom of Heaven which Christ proclaimed has its manifestation in the hearts and lives of men, and is propagated by contact of life with life and heart with heart. It is like a seed cast into the ground, which germinates and grows by assimilating and taking up into its own organism forces of the earth and atmosphere. It is like leaven hidden in the meal, which constantly enlarges its sphere of influence by communicating its own character to that which is capable of such transformation. The Divine Word could not return void to Him who uttered it and in obedience to that Word, the gospel must be preached in all the world, spite of all Jewish prejudice and Gentile opposition. The command of the Divine Master, the voice of the Spirit and the promptings of love unite to urge the disciples forth on their mission of salvation. Thus we have seen the gospel carried from Jerusalem into Samaria and then to places more remote. As one result of this a vigorous Christian community has come into being at Antioch, and now from that city, as a new centre of influence, we see the gospel carried to lands beyond the sea.

In the inauguration of this broader mission work of the church, two facts seem especially noteworthy. First it was entered upon under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In sending forth Barnabas and Saul to the work, the brethren at Antioch were not guided simply by their own wisdom, they were acting in obedience to promptings which they felt came from above, and this prompting of the Divine Spirit was in harmony with the commission of the risen Christ who had bidden His apostles go and preach His gospel in all the world. Many, since the day of these first foreign missionaries, have heard and gladly obeyed the command thus to go forth. The impulsion which Carey obeyed, and Judson, and many since their day, was doubtless as truly of the Holy Spirit as that by which Barnabas and Saul were moved. The other noteworthy fact is that the Holy Spirit evidently selected the strongest men in the church at Antioch for this work. It was not a mission on which to send men who were simply good, well-disposed or sentimentally pious. It was not sufficient that a man had some ability, and elements of usefulness in him. John Mark was no doubt a good and useful kind of man, but it appeared that he was not of the calibre required in a successful foreign missionary. Those who were to be pioneers in this work needed not only to be men of commanding ability, but men of great courage, patience, singleness of aim and invincible faith. It needed a Barnabas and a Saul to face the difficulties besetting the work to which these men were called.

But a careful comparison of the difficulties and discouragements which beset these apostles in their endeavors with those which confront the modern missionary who seeks to fulfil his Lord's commission and to obey the Spirit's promptings by declaring the gospel to the people of India, China or Africa, will we believe lead to the conviction that the modern missionary has no less need than had Paul of courage, patience, faith and power. It is true that the modern missionary is for the most part less subject to persecution than was Paul. He is not driven from city to city and his life put in constant jeopardy by Jewish malice. But, then, it was the Jews who afforded the apostolic missionary a point of contact with the communities he visited, and helped him to interpret his message to the world. In almost all places in which he proclaimed the gospel there were some of his own nationality whose hearts were opened to receive the message he brought them and who encouraged and helped him in his labors on behalf of the Gentiles. Paul was a man of mighty faith, but his faith was never subjected to the test of being sent to preach the gospel of Christ amid the awful moral and religious desolations of modern India, to a people so tyrannized over by caste and priestism, so corrupted, through false teaching, as to all their thoughts, affections and habits of life, as almost to have lost all capacity for faith in a personal God and

a Divine Saviour, a man whose first convert is a man who would have been patient for Paul to year under the conditions present than by which he was fields of Asia Minor study of Paul's life as of the conditions under which are incidental India to-day, shall a conception of Paul a ministry, and shall more highly the faith heroism which are be and women who have as truly as martyrs even to the service of Christ

Editorial

—The present season of unprecedented floods of its tributaries, inflicting loss upon the inhabited country, and causing the people along the coast Morris and other points also, it is reported, suffering some loss by her having risen to a point known to reach within flooded districts have histories of their houses, to the tops of the count to subside in the course the waters may rise in V tinguish the fires in the city in darkness for the effect of the flood in the serious.

—In the faith of J York Outlook, "death the spirit from the body chamber of death, he ca maiden to arouse again met the funeral procession of the young man to re when he came to the clo loud voice to the not far come back and bring the evident light again; w asked to be remembered, shalt thou be with me in body was being dissolved from its prison-house, he to the charnel-house of dreary sleep, not to a ante-room of immortality tion, but to the Father of concerning whom he he God of the dead but of the truth writ large on this God; death is also resurre to dust, ashes to ashes, is to add the words, the spiri

—Is there any law to pre alive a person who consent tic influence and then burie question which it seems th Simcoe, Ont., had occasion which it appeared difficult certain "Professor" Ferris, in a trance had him buried though in such a manner th supplied to him. The sher the friends of the "subject," with a posse of officers as th in, and ordered the "profess to take the man out. This that he had violated no law with the regular programme the subject. At last reports for law that would authorize the prospect seemed to be th ing which, according to arra to remain buried, might elap