

## QUARTERLY TEMPERANCE LESSON

– PROVERBS 23:29-35. – MARCH 28. –

**Golden Text:** – "At last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." – Prov. 23:32.

AVERY encouraging sign of progress in many parts of Christendom, our own land being considerably in the lead, is the wave of sentiment in favor of total abstinence from intoxicating liquors and the refusal of the masses to countenance the liquor traffic. The one message which the Lord gave to his people when he instructed them to preach the Word did not include total abstinence, and hence the Lord's consecrated people, faithful as priests, may not turn aside from their more important message, the calling of the Bride class, to urge upon the worldly this excellent but temporary and partial reformation. The message to the Church, to those called to be of the "elect," is the attainment of the spirit of a sound mind, which certainly would not permit them to take anything into their system which would befuddle their reason. Temperance, moderation, sobriety, is the inculcation of the Word of God and its spirit upon all who have named the name of Christ and proclaimed themselves followers of the Lamb.

The Apostle's words intimate that the consecrated are to do good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith; and this exhortation seems to justify us in occasionally saying just a word on the temperance question. It is right that our sympathies for temperance and every reformatory measure should be distinctly known to friends and foes in order that our good may not be evil spoken of by those zealous friends who, not understanding the Divine program and its "hidden mystery," think it strange that we run not with them into larger activities along the lines of social uplift and reforms. Having but

small personal experience along these lines, we think it best to present chiefly the words of others on this subject, as below:

The Rev. Dr. Smith's book, *Industrial Conflict*, says:

"In England, in three years of plenty in the seventies, wages were increased annually \$200,000,000. That made \$600,000,000 for the three years, but \$600,000,000 was just the amount of gold in circulation in Great Britain at that time. Did the workingmen by a common impulse, fired by a great ambition, save this \$200,000,000 a year? Did they change the savings into gold? Did they control the banks and dictate terms to financiers?"

"If these things had been done, the past thirty years would have seen a new England, and the whole world would have been filled with the songs of the great achievements that had at last been wrought by the working classes. They would have superannuated the aristocracy; they would have swept out age-worn traditions and institutions; they would have come into their own empire. The working people of England earned \$200,000,000 extra per annum, and the sad companion fact is that the drink bill of England during each of those three years increased just \$200,000,000. All the increase of that bill did not come from the working classes, but enough of it came from those classes to leave the argument still sound that what is wanted is not so much better opportunity as the capacity to make wiser use of such opportunities as men have.

"In the United States we spend about \$1,200,000,000 a year in drink. Would it not be worth while for the workingmen of America to take from that drink bill, say, \$250,000,000 a year, and put it in an industrial fund for the development of industrial enterprises owned by workingmen, managed by workingmen, and the profits of which should be received by workingmen?"

From Orison Swett Marden, Editor of *Success*, New York City: –

"My observation of cigarette smokers has confirmed my belief that no man or boy who is a victim of the cigarette habit can keep himself up to a high mental or physical standard. Cigarette smoking leads boys into bad company and a demoralizing environment. A New York City magistrate says that ninety-nine out of a hundred of all the lads charged with crime, from misdemeanors to burglary, have had their moral sense weakened by the poison of cigarettes....In fact, the moral depravity which follows the cigarette habit is appalling. Lying, cheating, impurity, loss of moral courage and manhood, a complete dropping of life's standards along the line, are its general results."

The Honorable Ben B. Lindsey, Judge of the Juvenile Court, Denver, Colorado, says: –

"Our lives depend a great deal upon our habits. Habits make or unmake men. The boy who starts with bad habits is almost sure to be a worthless man. If he starts with good habits, he is just as sure to be a good man; therefore boyhood is the most important part of life. One of the worst habits in boyhood is the cigarette habit. Persisted in, it dulls and deadens all the finer moral sentiments; it makes a physical and moral wreck of any boy. It is sure to lead the victim to other [R4338 : page 59] habits just as dangerous and disgusting. Years in the Juvenile Court of Denver convince me that it is one of the chief evils met in boyhood, and responsible for much weakness, misery and crime."

The Pittsburg Railways Company served this notice to its employees: –

"For the betterment of the service and the safety of the public, it will from this date be the policy of this company to NOT

retain in its employ men who use intoxicating liquors or cigarettes or are in the habit of gambling. While it is the privilege of each individual to eat, drink, and smoke what he pleases, it becomes the duty of this management to have in its service only men of sober and temperate habits, PHYSICALLY and MENTALLY able to perform the duties to which they may be assigned."

The superintendent gave his reasons for issuing the order as follows: –

"It is my aim and intention to pursue this policy without abatement, since I have by it proved beyond all doubt that it has raised the standard of our men. I have been criticised for the stringency of the order, especially the prohibition of the use of cigarettes; but on the other hand I have the assurance of our division superintendents (of which we have twelve), aided by my own observations, that persons addicted to the use of cigarettes, especially young men, are the most careless in their duties and less able to perform them than men using liquor in moderation. I may also mention that in seventeen years' experience as manager of public utility corporations I have had occasion to promote many of our men from the rank of conductors and motormen to officers, and in no case has a man using whiskey come up to the requirements."

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Our chief objections to many of the utterances of social reformers is that in their zeal they make of their reformation movement an antagonistic Gospel, proclaiming that by the methods they are advocating the Millennial blessings might all be introduced, regardless of Emmanuel and the Kingdom which he is to establish, and which the Scriptures declare to be the only power under heaven or amongst men authorized and capable of bringing in everlasting joy and blessing and Paradise restored. Reforms are merely palliative at very most; nothing but a change

of heart can bring the desired condition, and nothing but the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom, the overthrow of Satan's empire, and the deliverance of the slaves of sin and death from ignorance and superstition, etc., can bring the permanent blessings needed.

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