

the youth in efforts for the promotion of the cause.

"Temperance muscle," as one has remarked, "like all other kinds of muscle, will grow and toughen on work." At the regular meetings of our youthful society, and at Sabbath School concerts, young "temperance muscle" has an opportunity for exercise—that shall ensure its development—and such an increase of power as shall enable it to wield the weapons of lawful and righteous warfare to the overthrow of the monster evil that is destroying so many hopeless victims. Let this present generation of youth be but trained for the contest, and the victory for Temperance is assured.

Our youthful band of workers should be induced to engage in aggressive work. After having given a good concert in their own neighborhood, they might in a body visit some other community, and repeat their exercises. Such a service, properly conducted, might be more productive of good than the best Temperance Lecture that could be secured. The enterprise of the young crusaders who would march to the Holy Land to fight the Saracen, must of necessity come to an inglorious end, for they undertook what was, to them, an impossibility. Our youthful crusaders, however, need have no fear of defeat. They undertake a work, that shall not come to naught. There is an enemy more to be feared than the hated Turk, whose emissaries are in our midst sending in every direction the arrows of death;—a foe whose assaults are felt in the most sacred places; whose blighting presence desolates our homes so dear to every British heart—whose poisonous fangs are already fastened upon many a noble youth. See the lines of anguish on that father's face! See that broken hearted mother, bowed with a grief too deep for words to utter! See the tears, like great rain drops, falling from the cheeks of that loving sister who would fain sacrifice herself to save one for whom she vainly weeps. Ah! you cannot see all. You may witness the outward expression of grief, but that deep sorrow you cannot know. And why this sorrow? The story is soon told. The monster fiend, artful as the serpent, ferocious as the tiger, cruel as the grave has brought low a son, a brother, destroyed his manliness, wrecked his worldly prospects, made him a slave to the baser passions—a drunken sot. But can nothing be done to stay the mischief, and the sorrow? We answer, "Yes." By the light of the past, by the achievements of the present—by the hopes that gild the future we are assured of the ultimate downfall of the giant evil. Youth has suffered greatly by the demon's power and by the young shall his sceptre be broken. A stone from the sling of a young man slew him who of old defied the armies of Israel; and so by the means of those who may not be able to wear the armor of a Saul, we hope to fell to the earth that Goliath of iniquity, who defiantly sets himself against man, and insolently tramples upon the laws of the Creator. The persuasive words of a child, or a tear falling upon a hard, and calloused hand, has softened the heart, and saved the man. The value of the work done thus far by the young is incalculable; the future shall tell of triumphs greater and more glorious.

Such an instrumentality that I have suggested must certainly be employed as one of the greatest means for the ultimate triumph of the Temperance cause.

If all the Sabbath Schools in the country could be induced to undertake the plan I have suggested, a new impulse would be given to the work. Teachers would themselves become more earnest in the cause, parents would feel the influence of the movement, and many a name might be added to the roll of the pledged, that had otherwise been found in the lists of those who swell the dreadful calendar of crime.

Nothing of what is now being done in the Sabbath School, need be neglected by the introduction of Temperance. It will help rather than hinder its usefulness.

In closing these remarks I would most earnestly entreat the Sabbath School workers who hear me to give the subject their candid and serious consideration. It is well to think before

we act, but let us think wisely in the fear of the Lord and with sincere desire to do what we can to save our youth. Some may possibly object to the tobacco feature of the pledge. Even Sunday School teachers and superintendents are not all of them immaculate. But even in such a case with slight modification of the pledge and rules of the society a good work can be done. It may be left to the option of the members to say whether they include abstinence from tobacco or not. A star opposite the name may indicate that the subscriber pledges himself also against this evil practice. But I trust that such a necessity would never arise. Perhaps I do wrong to suggest the thought. Perhaps it implies a reflection upon my brethren that they will resent. Be it so,—I will only rejoice the more. But let us do something for the protection of our youth, something to allay the anxiety of parental hearts, something to save those who, by divine grace, and through our means, may contribute through the eternal ages to swell the song of praise to our dear Redeemer.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letter from France.

PARIS, March 6th, 1882.

A numerous class of Paris society, that which frequents the cafés, the clubs, the theatres, and the restaurants, has been convulsed of late by the overwhelming crash at the Bourse in inflated speculative stocks, that had previously risen with unexampled rapidity. The fortunes which had grown in a day have disappeared, like Aladdin's palace, in a night; men who were millionaires but two or three weeks since are at present rather uncertain as to whether they will be able to meet their liabilities. Of course great excitement has been caused by this rapid crumbling away of millions in paper; and the appearance of the Boulevard, of the Café de la Paix, and other haunts of the speculators, when they are not on the Change, has been peculiar. At every street corner, pairs and groups of men were to be seen eagerly conversing and gesticulating, ample fur collars were turned gloomily up as though to hide discomfited countenances, and in short a sudden and complete change had come over the spirit of the scene since the time when every one had netted large gains. We, in America, are only too well acquainted with these financial cataclysms, and these alternations of inflation and depression; but, heretofore, the French market had hardly ever passed through such a crisis as has overtaken it lately. The "krach," as the recent fall has been called, will not soon be forgotten by those who fancied opulence, gained by a fictitious rise, swept away before it as "the breath of the Saxons and Celts drives evermore to the West the scanty smoke of the wigwags."

The fogs which for so long along tenaciously about Paris, have finally disappeared and given place to alternations of sunshine and showers, which is a most agreeable change. Altogether the weather is more that of April than March, and the visibly swelling buds and fresh emerald tints of the grass betoken an early spring. A few more days of warm sunshine and the trees will begin to unfurl their vernal banners in earnest, and the thirsty Parisian will find it comfortable once more to resume his favorite occupation of sipping beer and coffee on the sidewalk in the shadow of the hospitable café. Indeed, he does it already, with apparently great satisfaction; but it must still be rather chilly except under the most favorable skies we have had thus far. It is hardly possible that this time-honored custom of reposing on the sidewalk to drink, smoke, and write letters, will ever die out in Paris; yet so many things are changing here that it is difficult to say what resort or custom may not be next abandoned to oblivion.

AUGUST.

An unkind word from one beloved often draws the blood from many a heart which would defy the battle-axe of hatred or the keenest edge of vindictive satire.

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1882.

SECOND QUARTER.

Lesson I.—APRIL 9, 1882.

DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Mark vi. 14-29.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vss. 14-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth."—Psalm xxxvii. 12.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

M. The Lesson, Mark vi. 14-29.

T. A Dangerous Woman, Judges xvi. 4-21.

W. Holy Women, 1 Peter iii. 1-7.

T. Elijah and Jezebel, 1 Kings xix. 1-18.

F. Message from John in Prison, Luke vii. 18-35.

S. Reward of the Persecuted, Rev. vii. 9-17.

S. The Beatitudes, Matt. v. 1-12.

SUFFERING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. A Guilty Conscience, Vs. 14-16. II. John Imprisoned, Vs. 17-20. III. John Beheaded, Vs. 21-29.

QUESTIONS.—Who was Herodias? Vs. 14-16.—What did Herod hear? How did he show the workings of a guilty conscience? Vs. 17-20.—For what sins had John reproved Herod? Vs. 21-29.—Who was Herod's tempter? Why did Herod grant Salome's request? Was he bound by his oath? What may we learn of the influence of wicked women? What did John's disciples do?

SPECIAL SUBJECTS.—Modern dancing: its character and effects. Jewish expectation of the return of Elijah, etc. Superstitions of unbelievers. Forms of persecution now. Persecutions of the Baptists.

NOTES.—I. A Guilty Conscience, (Vs. 14-16).

King Herod. Herod Antipas, second son of Herod the Great. Not strictly king, but "tetrarch." He ruled over Galilee and Peraea, and "his reign covered almost the whole life-time of our Lord, and continued beyond it, extending to A. D. 39."—Clarke. Spread abroad. Especially by the mission of the Twelve. Yet "heavenly things," says Bengel, "reach tardily king's palaces." John the Baptist was risen from the dead. Herod's explanation of the marvelous things which he heard of Jesus. He had unjustly put the Baptist to death, and to his guilty conscience—

"There rise dark spectres of the dead."

The new prophet must be the murdered John, come again with greater power than before. Others said, Or, were saying. Some thought him to be Elijah. See Mal. iv. 5. Others were not willing to be so specific, but cautiously suggested that he was a prophet, or as one of the prophets. But Herod could not be comforted by any such speculations.

II. John's Faithfulness, (Vs. 17-20).

The occasion of John's imprisonment and death was his rebuke of Herod for a great sin. Herod had previously been married to a daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petraea, (see 2 Cor. xi. 32); but having visited his brother Philip, he took his wife, Herodias, who was his own niece. This shocked the conscience of all the stricter Jews. John, filled with the spirit of Elijah, boldly rebuked Herod, saying, *It is not lawful, etc.* "The marriage was unlawful for three reasons: 1. The former husband of Herodias (Philip) was still living. 2. The former wife of Herod was still living. 3. Herod and Herodias were related to one another within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity."—Alford. Herodias was so enraged at John that she would have killed him; but she could not. The New Version says: "Herodias set herself against him," instead of *had a quarrel against him*. This is better; for it takes two to make a quarrel. She prevailed upon Herod to cast him into prison; and then, with vengeful feelings, bided her time. Not yet was Herod willing to proceed to extremities, for several reasons: 1. "He feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet," (Matt. xiv. 6). 2. He feared John, who made a powerful impression upon him, because John was a just man and a holy. Godliness wins respect even from the wicked. 3. Herod was, to some extent, interested in the mission of John; he heard him gladly. He had yet enough conscience to respond, in some measure, to the stirring words of the Baptist. Compare the conduct of Felix towards Paul, in Act. xxiv. 4. Herod "was much perplexed"; for thus the New Version properly renders, *did many things*, in v. 20. His posi-

tion towards John resembles somewhat the attitude of Pilate towards Christ. For about a year and a half, therefore, he balanced the question of John's deliverance or execution, while he "kept him safe," (New Version for *observed him*), in the castle of Machærus, a strong fortress on the eastern side of the Dead Sea.

III. John's Death, (Vs. 21-29).

Vs. 21-23.—While with Herod there was no halting in the mind of Herodias. As fiercely as Jezebel thirsted for the blood of Elijah, did she thirst for the life of the prophet. The convenient day, or favorable occasion to compass the death of John, came at last. Her plot was well laid. Like the Roman Emperors, the Herodian princes kept their birth days with feasting and revelry. A great supper was made on this special birth-day. Upon such occasions, girls were accustomed to dance before the half drunken company. This was the fashion both at Eastern and Roman banquets. Herodias knew the gross tastes of her husband, and exposed her own daughter, (whom Josephus calls Salome), in this shameless way. She had not miscalculated the effect of this appeal to Herod's coarser nature. His extravagant admiration is shown in his lavish offer to the damsel of a reward, even to the half of his kingdom; and this rash promise he confirmed with an oath. He probably expected no greater a request than jewels, or gold, or other articles of personal adornment.

Vs. 24-26.—*Went forth*. She passed out of the banquet-hall to the apartments of the women, to consult her mother. *The head of John*. "This prompt, laconic answer shows not only a pre-determined plan, but a vindictive temper and an iron will." *With haste*. Like mother, like daughter. She hurries back to Herod with the request, lest, with time for reflection, he may repent of his oath. *Exceeding sorry*. A mingled feeling of sorrow, chagrin at being over-reached, and, it may be, alarm at the consequences. The last struggle of an abused conscience. *For his oath's sake, etc.* He was too weak a man to break a bad promise, or to brave a false public opinion. King as he was, he was a slave to his drunken guests, and feared their jibes more than to do wrong.

Vs. 27-29.—*Immediately*. As if to give himself no time for further thought. *Charged*. A trencher, or platter; a large dish. *Gave it to her mother*. Herodias has her revenge, but at what a fearful cost! *His disciples* buried the body of their friend, and "went and told Jesus." Sorrow broke down the last barrier of jealousy on their part, and did its favorite work in bringing them to Jesus.

SUGGESTED LESSONS.

To be weak on the question of right, is to be wicked. There is little choice between the conduct of Herod and that of Herodias.

There is no safe dallying with sin. One must either forsake it, or be led into still deeper wickedness.

John's ministry was brief; but he did his appointed work, and did it well. Our efficiency is not measured by the length of service.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

Once a wicked king, named Herod, sent for John to come and preach to him. John told Herod just what a wicked man he was. King Herod had a very wicked wife. Her name was Herodias. Herodias hated John the Baptist. Do you remember where the king put John? The prison was a part Herod's great castle. Herod knew that John was a good man.

Herodias was not satisfied to have John the Baptist in prison. Can you think what else she wanted Herod to do? But Herod was afraid to do it. At last Herodias succeeded. Herod had a birth-day party. Read vs. 21-25. Who came in to dance? What did the king promise? Where did the girl go? What did her mother tell her to ask for? Finish the sad story in simple language. Do not try to enlarge upon its horrors. Speak tenderly of burial, and read Matt. iv. 12.

Herod was drunk! What a dreadful thing strong drink is! If Herod had not "looked on the wine" at that birth-day party, he might not have broken the Sixth Commandment. What is the Sixth Commandment?

A bad promise is better broken than kept."

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Idleness is the key of beggary and the root of all evil.

Temperance.

The Allies of the Temperance Reformer.

BY REV. J. J. MUIR.

True, staunch allies are valuable, and at times vitally important. We cannot multiply them too fast, or strengthen the relations which bind them to us, or the cause which we represent. The temperance reformer and reformer have reason for rejoicing in the encouragement and strength realized, as accessions have been made and alliances have been formed which have added to the character and influence of this great movement.

Let me suggest some worthy allies which have rallied under the temperance banner.

1. *The Scientist*. Within recent years the laboratory, the microscope, and the scalpel, have rendered great service. The influence of alcohol, and its particular action on certain parts of the human system, have been traced and closely observed. The local affinity of alcohol for the brain, declares scientific thought. As Joseph Cook has well remarked, "Cassio's language in Othello is to-day adopted by cool, physiological science: 'Oh God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! That we should, with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts! To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! Oh, strange! Every inordinate cup is unblessed, and the ingredient is the devil.' But science does more and says more than this. It answers the threadbare argument that the use of intoxicants is healthful, by affirming that alcohol contains no nutrition. It arrests waste, but does not repair waste. The chemist, by his analysis, proves that alcohol comes out of the system as it went in. Clearly and positively, the scientist makes his statements. The results of his careful investigation and painstaking research, confirm many of the positions which the temperance advocate has occupied. At the same time, other and stronger positions are taken. Right heartily we welcome the scientist as a noble ally."

2. *The Statesman*. Every year, this cause is coming more and more into prominence in political life. In line with the frequent affirmations of the Supreme Court of the United States, that the state has a right to regulate or prohibit the manufacture or sale of intoxicants, the statesmanship of the age is considering, as never before, the temperance question. The British Parliament and several of the State Legislatures, have had the matter under advisement. Like Banquo's ghost, the politician has found that this movement "will not down." He is compelled, therefore, to recognize its claims, and come to its aid. Clear-headed statesmanship is rallying round this flag. Notwithstanding the bitter opposition of sixth and seventh-rate politicians, who depend on bar rooms for their votes, the day is beginning to dawn when Prohibition, Constitutional Prohibition, shall bless the nation.

3. *The Women of our Land*. They suffer most from the evil, and after long forbearance, they have arisen in their majesty, and bravely they have resisted the demon who would destroy their homes, husbands, and children. Who can forget the women's movement of the West; that magnificent crusade, against rum, unequalled in heroism and devotion by the crusades inaugurated against the Turk for the possession of the Saviour's tomb? Who can ignore the work so well carried forward by the various Women's Temperance Societies throughout the country? Thank God for woman's work, for her zeal, her ardent faith, and her self-sacrificing labors. To this devoted ally we cordially give the right hand of fellowship.

4. *The Christian Church*. If Buddhism has promulgated a commandment prohibiting the use of intoxicating beverages, Christianity cannot afford to be left behind by a Pagan faith. If the Hindoo reads, "thou shalt drink no intoxicating liquor," the Christian must more than emphasize this article of a heathen law. The whole genius of our religion is antagonized against rum and the rum interest. We find that a "new departure" has been of late taken in temperance work. We have now gospel temperance as a distinct and marked feature. The church, so all-embracing and so radical in its reformatory measures, lends its sanctified aid, not only to the worker in this cause, but to the poor inebriate whom he would save. It throws its protecting arms around, and extends its generous sympathy and help to the man struggling against great temptation. With words of cheer and hope it encourages those who engage in this labor of love. Compared to the others named, this is the most welcome and efficient ally.

5. *A Great God*. "Best of all is," said the dying Wesley, "God is with us." So may the temperance reformer exclaim: "God is with us." Then success is sure. The cause with which he is identified cannot fail. Courage, fellow-worker, thou dost not toil in vain. In due season, thou shalt reap. Patiently but confidently expect the coming of the "due season," for our God will not disappoint or mock us.

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