

Young People's Column

FOR A MESS OF POTTAGE

"Have a smoke, old chap?"

Ted Lawrence opened a neat cigaret case and held it out invitingly to his friend, Jack Williams.

The two lads, schoolmates in a small suburban town, and now employed in opposite ends of the great city, had chanced to meet on a street-car, and Ted had insisted on taking Jack to a near-by restaurant for dinner and a reminiscent chat. They were topping off a hearty meal of steak, French fried potatoes and rolls with crackers and cheese and coffee, and Ted felt it was exactly the time to air his recently acquired familiarity with cigarets.

"Take one, Jack," he urged, still holding out the case. "They're a first-rate brand."

But Jack shook his head.

"No, thanks," he said. "I don't smoke."

"Haven't taken it up, yet, eh?" Ted queried as he lighted up.

"I started smoking soon after I came to the city," Jack explained, "but I gave it up."

"Thought you might be going to preach me a sermon on smoking," Ted grinned, "but if you went so far as to try it yourself I suppose it isn't against your principles."

"It wasn't," Jack told him, "but I'll say frankly that it is now."

"Then," Ted groaned, "I suppose you're going to tell me that it's extravagant, and bad for the health, and a lot more—I warn you here and now that you can't make a bit of impression on me. You see, I figure that I have a right to spend a little of my hard-earned cash on a few luxuries, and at present my health needn't be a source of worry to myself or anybody else. I'm perfectly fit."

"I do think smoking an expensive business," Jack replied honestly, "and I also believe that it is bad for one's health, and in many cases shortens life. But, as you say, a chap who is earning good money and is in splendid physical condition finds it easy to ignore these things for some time. It wasn't for either of these reasons that I gave up the habit."

"Then why did you give it up?" Ted demanded, puffing away merrily. "I don't believe I could if I wanted to. Why, I'm all upset if I can't have my smoke regularly three or four times a day."

"That's just it," Jack said quickly. "The habit was taking hold of me in the same way, and I saw plainly that it would soon be a question of whether the cigarets or I would come out on top. I decided that I'd be the master, not the mastered."

"To be the master?" Ted looked puzzled.

"You see," Jack continued, "I hated the idea of giving up my freedom for the sake of a few hours of lazy enjoyment each day."

"But it wasn't just enjoyment," Ted contended. "I get solid comfort out of my cigarets. When I'm tired or blue, a smoke will brace me up and make me feel cheerful quicker than anything else."

"Exactly," Jack said smiling. "And presently you'll get where you can't be braced up or cheered up by anything else."

"Oh, I don't believe I would ever get as bad as that!" Ted demurred. "Or you either."

"All smokers do in the end," Jack insisted, "and I, for one, am unwilling to indulge an appetite for anything which I know can get such a grip on me. It seems to me like selling

my birthright of liberty of thought and action for a mess of pottage."

"Say, that's not bad," Ted chuckled, "comparing tobacco to a mess of pottage. But I'd never looked at the question just that way before. So you think if I smoke I'm selling my birthright of liberty?"

"I know if I smoke I am," Jack replied. "But perhaps I had no business to talk so much. It's a personal matter, after all."

"I don't know about that," Ted answered gravely. "I guess it's better for the country, and the world in general, to have free men around instead of slaves. How about it?"

"Of course," Jack agreed, "but—"

Ted dropped his cigaret upon his dessert plate.

"Good-by to the mess of pottage," he said. "I'm going to be a free man from now on."—Selected.

TEMPERED

No one can proceed far in a knowledge of God and of his own soul without coming up against the matter of the tempers of his disposition. Many people are endowed by a favorable heredity that gives them a fair amount of forbearance and patience and composure of spirit. This is a gift of a good providence for which we should be duly grateful. Above and below are extremes. Here is the wild frenzy of passion that belongs to the unfortunates who go off into a rage like gunpowder. There is the easy-going soul who seldom awakes. He can hardly be prodded into a state even of righteous indignation against Satan's boldest assaults.

But one and all of us must come sooner or later to the conclusion that we need the remedy made in the atonement for our tempers, and we need a great deal of divine tutoring after grace has done its work of pardon and cleansing. You have seen a piece of metal cast in a mold, perhaps, that is so short in its grain and so brittle that it flies to pieces with a stroke of the hammer. Well, that same metal could be carried on from the pig iron and window weight stage through the steel-making processes that would turn out a product so hard and so adhesive in structure and so compact in its fibers that it will bear up under the hardest test of the laboratory. Put it into the main spring or hair spring of a watch and it will do its work for a lifetime. Put it into the chassis of an automobile and it will withstand the strains of hard use until the whole car is worn out. Look about anywhere in the mechanical arts and you will see illustrations of the benefits of tempered products.

We have met with some saints of God who are well advanced in this handiwork of God in the soul. They have strength to endure. They are hard and firm, yet they are resilient and hold to good form under extreme pressure. They are kindly and patient and speak well and look good. The beauty of holiness is on them. Their great ambition is to be like Christ. They are getting ready to live with the angels in heaven and with all the holy beings there. They have long since advanced from the stage of being worldly-minded and attracted by the best the world can offer in its barter for souls. They are trustworthy. They are dependable. Their lives are in tune with the motives that belong in heaven. Ill-winds of opposition do not ruin them; Satan's cajolery does not win them; cunning compromise does not buy them; the waiting time does not wear them out. It is a great thing to have a tempered soul, the Lord Himself being the master workman to direct the process.—The Wesleyan Methodist.

"LEST THE MINISTRY BE BLAMED"

The 1932 meeting of the Alliance at Beulah Camp Grounds gave birth to two organizations which are destined to develop into lusty manhood and which, no doubt, will mean much to our future success as a denomination. I refer to the Reformed Baptist Young People's Association and to the Reformed Baptist Educational Council. The first is to provide a denominational voice for our hitherto unified Young People's Societies and Praying Bands scattered throughout our churches and the second is to provide a live channel through which our young ministry may be aided and encouraged in their preparation for their life's tasks and responsibilities.

If we can now boast of ecclesiastical machinery for all of our various activities, our shorts should not blind us to the fact that machinery must be kept in good repair and must be put to some good use before it profits any one or anything. Let us guard against accumulating junk piles that are in constant need of up-keep and which only multiply "offices!" Our future tasks will lie in perfecting our present organizations and in making these channels, through which the cause of Christ may be furthered and strengthened.

Hitherto, our ministerial education has been lacking in purpose and balance. Each "called-out one" has pursued whatever line of preparation he wished or could obtain with his own efforts and understanding. He has been aided very little in advice or in money.

As the years have gone on, our older and more experienced brethren have come to see that they have been warring with duller weapons than they might have had. The result has been that these have constantly urged the younger men to spend more time in whetting their instruments and not to rush headlong into a fray that is to last a life time and that has to do with immortal souls.

Later, a ruling was made to the effect that no minister should be ordained without the minimum standard of a High school education or its equivalent. For many years this ruling has been unchanged.

For a number of years, there has been a growing consciousness within our denomination that our ministry should have a higher or, at least, a more definite standard for ordination than the one just cited.

Although we all realize that education alone cannot make an aggressive or a live ministry that is a flaming evangel, yet methinks every intelligent person realizes that we are living in an age of quickly changing standards and educational programs and so it behooves every servant of God to know whereof he speaks and to give every man a reason for the faith that is his.

In order to provide a definite standard in the place of the vague "equivalent," the Educational Council was born. Its personnel consists of the following: Revs. G. A. Rogers, A. B.; S. G. Hilyard, A. B.; H. S. Dow, L. T. Sabine, H. C. Mullen and Licentiate E. A. M. Kierstead, B. A.

The aim of the Council is to foster ministerial education generally, and to draw up and provide means for giving a course of study that shall be the "equivalent" of a High school course. The course is primarily for the benefit of men who have been called to the ministry from a secular calling and find it impossible to go to a Bible School or college; it is not designed as a substitute for a High school education, since we advise all our young