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→ SERMONS ←

OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY.*

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Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him will they ask the more.—LUKE xii., 48.

It is the law of God's government that opportunities enjoyed bring a corresponding measure of responsibility. His gifts are trusts to be so administered and enjoyed, that they shall report themselves in the advancement of the interests for which He carries on the world. He never makes us irresponsible owners of anything. We have no talent or treasure with which we are permitted to do absolutely as we please. The idea that we are required to answer only to ourselves for the use of what we have is false as to fact and pernicious in influence, and any life built upon such an assumption will be as unhappy as it is unwise. He who lives wholly, or even chiefly, for himself betrays his own best interests and destroys his greatest possibilities. Responsibility constantly answers to opportunity and cannot be dissociated from it.

The text is the divinely formulated statement of this great truth, applicable in all times and places—"to whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." God announces the law and all men demand its honest fulfilment. Therefore in the forward look you take to-day you can only form an adequate idea of what the world may justly require of you, and of what you should still more inexorably demand of yourselves, by a careful

* Baccalaureate Sermon delivered June, 1887.

drinks." Dr Sewell states that, out of two hundred and four cases of cholera in Park Hospital, New York, only six were abstainers, and they recovered.

Finally: a proper dose of alcohol will produce instant death, by its action on the nerves. A smaller dose will have a proportionate effect on the nerves. If you want to tremble with palsy, if you want to feel liquid fire along every nerve, take only wine cordial. If you want to see "more devils than vast hell can hold," take something stronger and oftener. One of the most absolute certainties of time and eternity, is, that this effect will follow, and may last forever.

Intemperance Degrades.

BY T. DE WITT TALMAGE (PRESBYTERIAN), N. Y.

I do not care how much a man loves his wife and children; if this passion for strong drink has mastered him, he will do the most outrageous things, and if he could not get drink in any other way he would sell his family into eternal bondage. How many homes have been broken up in that way no one but God knows. Oh, is there anything that will so destroy a man for his life and damn him for the life that is to come? I hate that strong drink. With all the concentrated energies of my soul I hate it. Do not tell me that a man can be happy when he knows that he is breaking his wife's heart and clothing his children in rags. Why there are on the roads and streets of this land to-day little

children barefooted, unwashed and unkempt—want on every patch of their faded dress and on every wrinkle of their prematurely old countenances—who would have been in churches to day and as well clad as you are but for the fact that rum destroyed their parents and drove them into the grave. O rum, thou foe of God, thou despoiler of homes, thou recruiting officer of the pit, I hate thee! But my subject takes a deeper tone, and that is that the unfortunate of whom I speak suffer from the loss of the soul. The Bible intimates that in the future world, if we are unforgiven here, our bad passions and appetites, unrestrained, will go along with us and make our torment there. So that, I suppose, when an inebriate wakes up in the last world he will feel an infinite thirst clawing on him. Now, down in the world, although he may have been very poor he could beg or steal five cents with which to get that which would slake his thirst for a little while; but in eternity where is the rum to come from? Dives could not get one drop of water. From what chalice of fire will the hot lips of the drunkard drain his draught? No one to brew it. No one to mix it. No one to pour it. No one to fetch it. Millions of worlds then for the dregs which the young man just now flung on the saw dusted floor of the restaurant. Millions of worlds now for the rind thrown out from the punch-bowl of an earthly banquet. Dives cried for water. The inebriate cries for rum.

PRAYER MEETING SERVICE

Stormy-Night Meetings.

BY REV. S. W. ADRIANCE, CONGREGATIONALIST.

Be particular to go to the prayer meeting on stormy evenings.

I. Because your pledge covers stormy evenings as well as other evenings. If you are well and strong there is no reason why it is not just as much your duty to go on stormy nights as on other nights.

II. Because you are particularly needed then. Some cannot and ought not to go out on stormy nights. It is our duty to care for our health. But others always go to business, however stormy. These have no excuse for not attending prayer-meetings on stormy evenings. If there are young ladies who would go to a party, even in a storm, then by all that is consistent they are required, not only by their pledge, and by others, but most of