

National Temperance Study Course 1947

Sunday, October 19th, 1947

LESSON III

Senior

WHY PEOPLE DO AND DO NOT DRINK

By George A. Little

There are about two billion persons living on the earth at present. Over two-thirds of these do not use alcohol as a beverage. Their freedom from drink is largely a matter of racial custom and religious teaching.

The taste for alcohol as a beverage has to be acquired. No one has an instinctive desire for alcohol in the way that there is an appetite for food. No child growing up would think about it if it were not forced upon him by social custom and sales promotion. It is an artificial habit. Beverage alcohol is not necessary for healthful living. Why then is it so widely used in Europe and America?

Social Pressure

The pressure upon people to "do what is done" is certainly one reason. The use of liquor has become falsely associated with hospitality, ceremonial occasions and religious rites. Dinner parties are thought to be more stylish if expensive wines are served. Toasts are drunk to the health of a bride at a wedding, or to a soldier rejoining his regiment. In business firms Christmas parties are often held at which all employees are expected to drink. Cocktail parties are reported unashamedly in the social columns. So it is not a simple decision of drinking or not drinking. Other considerations enter in such as following the crowd, honouring a guest, being loyal to an organization. It is this social pressure that leads many people to take their "t" drink, despite their objection to it and their lack of any desire for it.

Propaganda Advertising

Others respond to attractive liquor advertisements on billboards, in newspapers and magazines and over the radio. Pictures are shown of "men of distinction." Patriotic appeals are made. Until forbidden by law the flag was widely used. Last year the sacred Christmas theme was employed to attract youth to use liquor. Easter is featured in the same way. One hundred million dollars a year are spent annually advertising liquor in North America. The liquor sellers feel that they have to spend this money to keep their customers drinking and to recruit new drinkers from the ranks of youth. Now liquor advertising is made very attractive. Pictures are shown of arches, boats, wild animals, historic places and people, athletic games, homes, reunions and happy young people. The liquor advertisements never tell of accidents, arrests, foolish talking and hang-overs. They never show a picture of a drunk person. They so glamorize the dangerous habit of drinking that many are deceived into thinking it is smart to drink.

Profits Require Big Sales

If young people are left to themselves they can be happy without alcohol, but they are constantly exposed to the aggressive sales promotion of the liquor industry. There are huge profits in making and selling liquor. A glass of beer can be made for a cent; it often sells retail for 10 cents. A quart of whisky can be made for less than 50 cents; it may retail by the glass for \$2.00 a quart. The head of one Canadian distiller has a salary of \$50,000, another \$52,000 a year. The head of one Canadian brewing corporation has an income of several million dollars a year. One brewing company predicted a profit of twelve million dollars in one year. Another liquor firm reported a dividend of 32 per cent for one year. Such profits depend on customers consuming liquor. The aim of the liquor industry is "more people drinking more". The easiest group to persuade is youth who lack experience in the evil effects of drink. So the liquor traffic coaxes youth to drink.

A Lame Excuse

The desire to escape is frequently given as an excuse for drinking. People are tired and depressed. The atomic bomb has frightened them. Taxes are high. There have been two world wars. Alcohol is a sedative, a narcotic that dulls memory and numbs feeling. Why not use it? One answer is that solving problems by drinking is an escape from reality a dodging of duty, a refusal of responsibility. Suppose there is a fire or an accident when someone has dulled consciousness by drink. A doctor, a nurse, a police officer or fireman may be called in an emergency. If drinking they would be unfit for duty. Another weakness in this escape theory is that drink does not solve any problems; it only postpones the day when they must be faced. Those who drink to escape worry, fear or debt find these problems awaiting them when they become sober again. Often the problem is not very heroic to run away from difficulties by drugging the mind with drink. Escapism is cowardice.

To Refuse is Noblest

Some people never start to drink and they can tell us why. Their parents have told them that drink can be deadly dangerous. In school they have had lessons showing the effect of alcohol upon the brain and the results upon conduct. In church and Sunday School they have memorized great Bible verses

warning against the dangers of drink. Others have had the law laid down to them by athletic coaches who say alcohol as a beverage is a foe to strength, skill and speed. Not a few young people have seen drunken people staggering in the street or arrested by the police or acting in a way that they will keep themselves under control at all times. They say that they are so happy and healthy that they do not need to seek fun out of a bottle. Others realize that it does not do Canada any good to be spending over a million dollars a day on drink. They decide that they can spend their earnings in a more productive fashion.

Many people stop drinking in utter disgust, and they tell us why. One disgraced himself at a public banquet and said, "Never again." Another had a fight with his best friend. Another issued several cheques while drunk with no money in the bank to cover them. Another had a car accident and lost his driver's licence. Another bought a ticket for a train trip and woke up in a distant city without a cent for food, or shelter, or return. Some stop drinking because they have lost their jobs through liquor or have been arrested. There were nearly 47,000 arrests for drunkenness in Canada in 1945. There were one thousand arrests of women for drunkenness in one Canadian city in 1946—being arrested for drunkenness is not a pleasant experience. Many have stopped drinking because a physician said that alcohol was injuring health. Others have taken cures in sanatoriums or have been freed from the habit through the help of Alcoholics Anonymous, or through a deep, spiritual conversion. One man told his story briefly: "I walked into a bar. I fell out. I stayed out."

You Must Decide

What is your personal decision? You are the one to decide what goes down your own throat. No fictitious person on a billboard or magazine cover should make your choice for you. Total abstinence is the easiest and best solution. It removes the problem once and for all. The decision is made definite by signing a declaration of purpose that you will abstain. In this way the decision is made in advance of the temptation to drink. Those who adopt the attitude of being fifty-fifty are never quite sure whether at any given moment they will be in a sober mood or a drinking mood. Sooner or later you will be invited to drink socially. Nothing is surer than that. A survey showed that many heavy drinkers began between the ages of 17 and 20. Plan beforehand how you will refuse, courteously but firmly and finally. You will act according to the picture you see of yourself as a capable, controlled, Christian Canadian citizen.

Which motive will govern your decision? Fear is not all good motives? Fear is a sensible motive: one drinker in five becomes a heavy drinker, and you might be that one. Health is a worthy motive: liquor is not needed either in health or sickness. It is a good purpose: bank your money in your own name—don't turn it over to a brewer or distiller who has millions already. Education is a high ideal: discipline your mind and never drug it. Skill is a factor in success and remember that alcohol is always a depressant, slowing reaction time and reducing efficiency. Family life is important: liquor causes endless home friction and breaks up many homes. Your influence for good will be vastly greater if you never taste liquor. Your example can safeguard others. Safety as a car driver is surely one very practical reason for you. As Christians we seek to do the will of God, live in the spirit of Christ and build the kingdom of God on earth. If devoted to this high commitment we need never be ensnared by that ancient and evil brain drug, alcohol. If we know these truths, the truth will keep us free.

QUESTIONS

1. Give three reasons why people should not drink.
2. Give three reasons why people do drink.

Study III, October 19th Junior

THE BOX MARKED "PRIVATE"

Once upon a time there was a certain business firm called Self, Limited. Like most businesses,

Leading Lights

IN MEDICINE
SIR FREDERICK GRANT BANTING
Banting, Canadian medical scientist and Nobel Prize winner. Discovered the insulin treatment for diabetes in 1922.



ANNIVERSARY SALE

25 FUR COATS

Going at

1/2 Price

10% to 20% REDUCTION

on all regular stock

Save up to \$250.00

Buy a new fur coat

for as little as

\$85.00



it began in a very small way, but it grew so rapidly, both in size and importance, that Mr. Self, the owner, had to engage and train a general manager and a secretary to assist him in his affairs. The manager's name was Mr. Criticism, and the secretary's Miss Memory.

Mr. Criticism was a rather serious-minded person, with a strong sense of duty and of the conduct, manners and general behaviour which were to be expected from a firm of such standing as Self, Limited. Wherever Mr. Self went, there went Mr. Criticism at his elbow, noticing everything, and always ready with a whispered word of advice, encouragement or warning. Mr. Self relied on his good judgement in everything, and as a result the firm of Self, Limited, was held in great respect wherever it was known.

The secretary, Miss Memory, was equally valuable to the firm. She made notes of everything that happened and entered them in special notebooks, all carefully indexed so that at a moment's notice she could turn to anything required.

Most of her note-books she carried about with her tucked under her arm or in her pockets, but there was one book, she would allow no one else to touch. The box was marked "Private", and Mr. Criticism kept the key on his

watch chain.

When the firm was about twenty-five years old it happened that Mr. Self was invited to spend the evening at the house of a friend, and of course Mr. Criticism and Miss Memory went with him, for he could not get on without them even on such an occasion.

Among the guests was a certain Mr. Intoxicants; he seemed a very agreeable fellow, and everyone but Mr. Self, was on very familiar terms with him.

"What?" exclaimed the host. "Do you mean to say you don't know him? I must introduce you at once. Intoxicants is quite the most delightful companion; I should never dream of giving a party without him; he manages to get everyone talking and laughing in no time, and makes them all feel unusually pleased with themselves."

"Intoxicants!" repeated Mr. Self. "I'm sure I've heard the name before. Miss Memory, one moment, please; turn up any notes you have about Mr. Intoxicants."

Miss Memory found the place in her note-book at once. "There are three notes about him, Sir," she said briskly. "First, a sermon you heard last October on Temperance Sunday, warning everyone against even the most casual friendship with him."

"Excuse me," said Mr. Intoxicants at Mr. Self's elbow. "I couldn't help over-hearing what

your charming secretary just read. I'm surprised you let her worry you with such rubbish!"

"Note Number Two," said Miss Memory, ignoring the interruption; "several gentlemen of your acquaintance, Mr. Self, have come to grief soon after becoming intimate friends with Mr. Intoxicants."

"But why blame me for the disaster?" asked Mr. Intoxicants indignantly. "How do you know they would not have come to grief anyhow?"

"Note Three," read Miss Memory "your mother, when you were a boy begged you never to have anything to do with this gentleman."

"Poof!" exclaimed Mr. Intoxicants, testily. He slipped a finger into Mr. Self's buttonhole and drew him on one side. "Look here, my dear fellow," he said confidentially "you're quite out of things on an occasion like this without my help. Everyone's staring and whispering because they see you are not on intimate terms with me, and—I hope you won't feel hurt—your conversation is desperately sensible and dull and polite. Come, be a sport and make friends, even if it is only for this evening, and see if I don't help you to be the lion of the party!"

Mr. Self felt very uncomfortable. After Miss Memory's notes he knew he ought to refuse Mr. Intoxicants' help, but at the same time he could not help feeling that the other

guests were thinking him odd and dull.

"I'd be careful what I was about Sir," whispered Criticism in his ear. "I'd be careful how I let an old sport-sport dictate to Me!" whispered Mr. Intoxicants in the other ear. "You are a silly muff!"

"Oh, come along then!" exclaimed Mr. Self, impatiently. "I'll be friends with you for tonight."

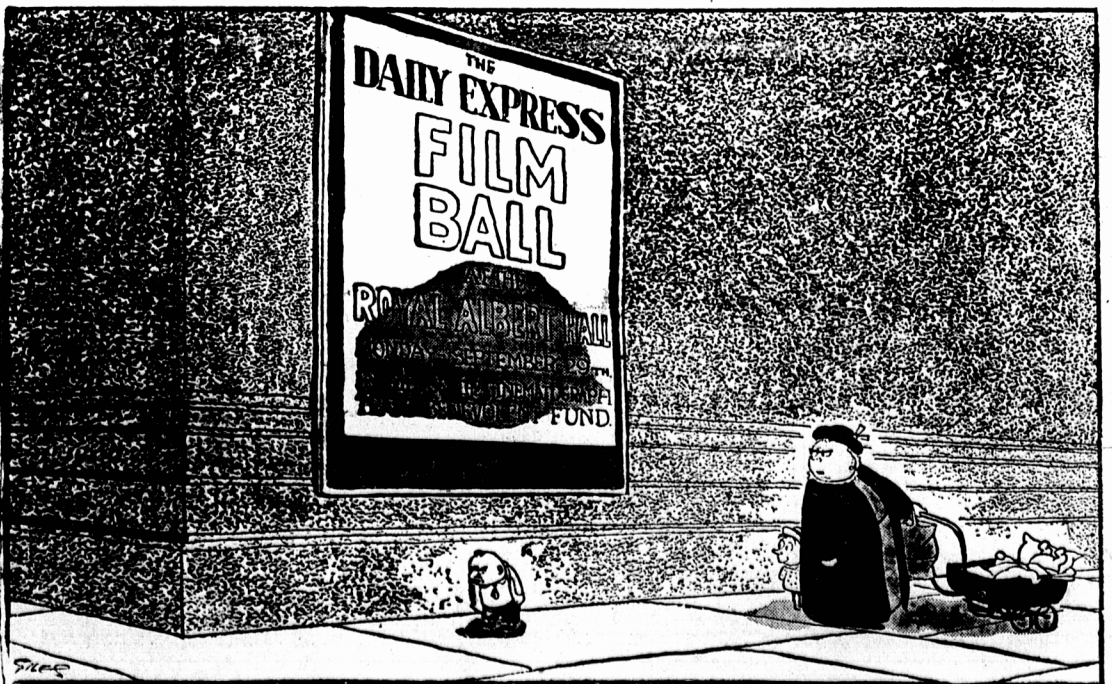
"That's a sensible fellow!" cried Mr. Intoxicants, and showing Mr. Criticism to one side he squeezed Mr. Self in next to Mr. Self and sat down.

It was wonderful what a difference it made to Mr. Self. He no longer felt dull and out of things, and he began to talk more and to raise his voice so as to get attention.

"Sir! Sir!" whispered Mr. Criticism trying to reach around Mr. Intoxicants to pull Mr. Self's coat-tails. "You're preventing other people talking, and you are not saying anything worth hearing."

Mr. Intoxicants nudged Mr. Criticism sharply with his elbow. "Shut up!" he growled; but to Mr. Self he exclaimed, "Excellent! Excellent! I knew you would be a brilliant talker if you let yourself go. There's just one little fault; you're too goody-goody and polite; could not your secretary turn up

Continued on page 12



"Well, you can't take Margaret Lockwood or Pat Roc, so come on!"

Some People think they must have Holes in their Pockets



They find money so easy to spend . . . so hard to save

But anybody can save money through Canada Savings Bonds . . . especially when the money is set aside at source on the Payroll Savings Plan. You save before you have a chance to spend . . . and at the end of twelve months you own a safe, readily cashable Bond. Or if you wish you may buy for cash. They're on sale NOW—so act to-day!

ON SALE through your Company's Payroll Savings Plan, your Investment Dealer, or your Bank.

You'll never be sorry you saved!



Canada Savings Bonds SECOND SERIES

Relief Supplies Sent To St. Basile, N. B.

MONCTON, N. B., Oct. 15—(CP)—44 to 54 refugees of St. Basile, N.B., left homeless after fire nearly destroyed the entire village, is being offered from all parts of the Province and points in Maine, Red Cross officials announced here

today. Two Red Cross trucks arrived at the burned-out village settlement today, loaded with relief supplies and donations.

SPRAK HINDUSTANI

The Mohammedan people of India, about 70,000,000 generally speak one language—Hindustani.