

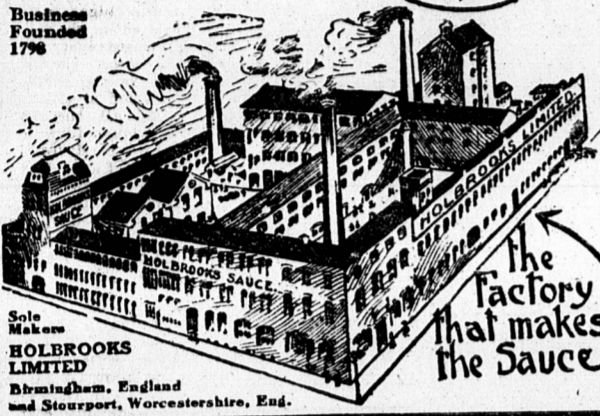
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## S. S. LESSON

MARCH 19.

DEFEAT THROUGH DRUNKENNESS.

1 Kings 20: 12-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"It is not for kings to drink wine: nor for princes strong drink."—Prov. 31: 4.

POINTED SUGGESTIONS.

By Rev. D. W. Selder.

When was it ever anything else but defeat through drunkenness? What recommendation can the drink habit produce from any side? If the case of Benhadad had anything singular or unexpected about it which went to show that others have succeeded and won victories through their drunkenness where he failed, the element of surprise would enter into the study of the lesson. But the interpretation of Benhadad's D. D. is easy, namely, Drunkenness—Defeat, because they always go together.

The Golden Text points out that none, such as kings and princes, who are supposed to have good judgment and to need it ought to drink wine or strong drink. Every Canadian belongs to that class.

The conduct of Benhadad in his cups was neither better nor worse than other men in their intoxication. He was simply a boasting, vociferous and impudent fool, who was for the time being completely blind to his folly.

What a picture of debauched helplessness he makes as he is lifted from his disgusting seat of vain and babbling commands in his pavilion and placed and held in the saddle by his horsemen and hustled from the pursuit of Israel! The ages are left to hiss or in pity lament at his retreating, swaying form, from which every and power of manliness is sapped, saying: Defeat! defeat!

And to be beaten by Ahab. Matthew Henry says: "God sometimes makes one wicked man to be the scourge of another." Yes. That is quite true, and quite often it is true.

But do not forget that Elijah was a prophet of Israel, and remember that Carmel had driven one or two things into the brain of Ahab and that he was, therefore, ready to take a little favourable advice from one who came to him, saying, "Thus saith the Lord." We can say to what extent the kingdom of Israel was spared the devastation of the Syrians because of the schools of the prophets which Elijah had established?

The annals, records and chronicles of the courts of kings and queens afford striking reading in the revolutions they make or their drunken orgies and debaucheries. No nation has been free from such courts. Drunkenness has been the ruin of many dynasties. It has brought the successors of great kings to imbecility, and exile, and poverty, and extinction.

The list of mighty men—orators, statesmen, poets, soldiers, ministers, millionaires—who have been, like Benhadad, utterly and irrevocably defeated through drunkenness, is a long and sorry one. Let the class name a few. The history of any nation will furnish a full share—Roman, French, German and British, United States, Yes, and Canadian.

But better days are on and still better days are ahead. The German Kaiser, the President of the United States and our own King George are said to be at the time total abstainers. Their influence is in that direction. They should look to it if it is not.

The liquor traffic is doomed. It is on the run. Some are trying to hold it to its place, like the horsemen of Benhadad, who kept him from falling from his saddle. But the doomed liquor traffic is reeling and staggering to its fall and finish. The Ahabs of industry are after it as well as the prophets of the Lord. Let the young men, the princely voters of the provinces, be after it, too.

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