

National Temperance Study Course

WHAT DOES IT MATTER?
(Junior)

Once upon a time there was a young man called Thomas Trifler, and he was determined to have a good time. So he neglected his work as much as he dared, and stayed out late every night, and drank and smoked and did whatever he pleased.

"You'll never get on in the world," said his father.

"You'll never know what real happiness means," said his mother. "You'll ruin your health," said the doctor.

"You'll lose everyone's respect," said the parson.

And all his relatives, friends and neighbours had something of the same sort to say.

But Thomas Trifler would not take any notice of their warnings. "I shall live my own life how I please," said he. "What does it matter to other people how I choose to spend it? I don't interfere with their way of living, so why should they try to interfere with mine?"

Well, one fine night when he had been having a better time than usual, he was so unsteady on his legs and so muddled in his head that he was quite unable to find his way home, and he tumbled down in the middle of the road, and lay there until a policeman came by and trundled him off to the police station in a wheelbarrow.

Next morning Thomas Trifler was taken before the magistrate. "If you please, your Honour," said the policeman, "I found this man lying dead drunk in the road last night, and quite incapable of minding himself."

"Is that true, Thomas Trifler?" asked the magistrate.

"I expect it is," said Thomas cheerfully. "I don't remember anything about it, but I like to get drunk now and again."

"It doesn't matter whether you like it or not," said the magistrate, "such drunkenness can't be allowed; and as the only cure for drunkenness is to stop drinking, you must become a total abstainer and sign the pledge."

"But it's not fair to stop me drinking altogether," exclaimed Thomas Trifler indignantly. "It's not my fault it's so stupid."

"But the magistrate only said, 'No,' said the policeman.

"And I wasn't stealing, or damaging anyone's property, was I?" "No," said the policeman.

"Then why shouldn't I get drunk when I want?" asked Thomas Trifler. "What does it matter to other people whether I drink or not? I'm not interfering with them?"

"We'll see about that," said the magistrate. "It can be proved

that your drinking habits do not disturb and trouble anyone else I'll discharge you, and you may continue to do just as you like."

So the crier was sent round the town. "O yes! O yes! O yes!" he called. "Let everyone to whom it matters whether Thomas Trifler drinks intoxicants or not, come at once to the court to state his case. God save the King!"

In a very short time the court was filled to overflowing.

"Call the first witness!" said the magistrate.

"The first witness was Thomas Trifler's mother.

"And why does it matter to you whether your son drinks or not?" asked the magistrate.

"Because when he's out late and I don't know if he is coming home drunk or sober, how can I go to sleep till he's safe in bed?" asked Mrs. Trifler. "What does it matter to me, indeed? It means that five nights out of six I'm tossing and turning, wondering if he's left himself sense enough to get home without falling in front of a car, or stumbling into the river, or breaking his neck on the front steps."

"I don't want her to lie awake!" said Thomas indignantly. "It's not my fault it's so stupid."

"But the magistrate only said, 'Call the next witness!'"

Up stepped Thomas Trifler's father.

"Well," said the magistrate, what have you to say?"

"Only this, your Honour," said Mr. Trifler, "when my son is drinking and having a good time he spends more money than he earns, and then he comes to me for help to settle his debts. I'm not a rich man, your Honour, and it's hard to have to break into my savings."

"You needn't lend me the money if you feel so stingy," said Thomas sulkily. But the magistrate only said, "Next witness!"

"That's me, your Honour!" said Thomas Trifler's brother. "It's not fair to the rest of the family if Thomas is allowed to go on drinking and doing as he likes. He gets himself talked about all over the town, and people don't like to be friends with me, or to give me a job, because they suppose I must be as wild and unreliable as he is. Thomas may be having a good time, but he's spoiling the chances of the rest of us."

The next witness was the little girl who lived next door.

The magistrate looked her up and down. "Dear me," said he, "you're a very small person to have anything to say as to whether Thomas Trifler should drink or not."

"I'm big enough to be frightened," said the little girl. "I'm frightened to come back from school by myself, because when he's had something to drink he's so nasty and silly, and tries to catch me and kiss me."

There was someone else, a pretty young woman, who seemed to have been crying.

"Now why are you here?" asked the magistrate. "What can it matter to you what Thomas Trifler does?"

"It matters to me more than to anyone else," said the young woman, "because I'm in love with him, and he's asked me to marry him. But how dare I marry anyone who doesn't care what happens so long as he has a good time? What sort of a husband and father would he make?"

Thomas Trifler hung his head till all that could be seen were his very red ears. "There can't be any more of them, at any rate," he muttered.

But he was wrong; the court-house was still full of people waiting to explain why they objected to him taking intoxicants.

The first to stand up were the men who worked with him.

"Thomas is the best workman of the lot of us when he sets his mind to it," said they; "but when he's been drinking and staying out late he isn't fit for anything next morning, and we have extra work to do."

After them came the motorists, fifty or sixty at least.

"Look here!" exclaimed Thomas Trifler indignantly. "I don't know a single one of you! What in the world can it matter to you if I drink?"

"It matters just this," said the motorists; "for one reason or another we sometimes have to drive through this town late at night; if you are sober either you will be in bed when we come through, or you will walk sensibly on the pavement; if you are not sober, you may reel about the road, or even lie down on it, and there's no telling what horrid accident you may cause."

Then the magistrate cleared his throat, and the policeman shouted "Silence in court!"

"Thomas Trifler!" said the magistrate, "the kind of life you lead matters to hundreds of people beside yourself. You have heard the ways in which your drinking habits interfere with the rights of others; you can no longer be allowed to please yourself in the matter. You must become a total abstainer and shoulder your share of responsibility. By insisting that you become a total abstainer I am giving you an opportunity to have the best time of your life, and you'll come back to thank me."

without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." (Prov. 23: 29-32.)

"But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink; they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in wisdom, they stumble in judgement." (Isa. 28: 7.)

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink" (Hab. 2: 15).

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended, or is made weak." (Romans 14: 21.)

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with Spirit." (Eph. 5: 18.)

By using a concordance, and looking up the words "drunkard," "drunkenness," and "strong drink" you could add many other passages to this brief list.

A summary of the teachings of the Bible on drinking would include these points: (1) The use of liquor brings about physical deterioration. Isaiah mentions several aspects. (2) Strong drink is deceptive. The colour, the sparkle, and the smoothness mentioned by the writer of the Proverbs remind one of some present-day advertising except that the end result, the serpent's bite and the adder's sting are omitted from these advertisements, though not from the ancient writing. (3) Then, too, drunkenness moves in bad company. I Samuel 30: 16 links it with thievery, and St. Paul in Galatians 5: 19 adds many others to the vicious list.

There was one clan in ancient Israel which completely abstained from drinking wine. They were the Rechabites, described in the thirty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah. Verses five and six read like this: "And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine. But they said, We will drink no wine; for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons forever."

Another passage tells the story of a young Hebrew, named Daniel, who lived about 600 B.C. Daniel was a captive in Babylon, where he and three of his companions were selected for special training

to enter the king's service. We read that "the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank."

Then the story continues: "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat nor with the wine which he drank." It doesn't require much imagination to look behind this event and picture the religious teaching and training that went on in the early homes of these young men back in Palestine. Quite clearly, from their earliest childhood there had been built into their lives and characters certain great moral convictions. Among these was the conviction that they ought not to indulge in wine. Now they had the moral courage to stand by their convictions. They were young, but they didn't use that as an excuse for conforming to the ways of Babylon. They might forfeit by their refusal the chances of promotion that were coming their way, they might incur the wrath and punishment of the king, but these considerations didn't matter when was right.

Now, it is true that there are passages in the Bible which seem to speak approvingly of the use of wine, notably Paul's advice to Timothy to "drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." (I Timothy 5: 23.) It should be remembered that people

at that time knew little about sanitation and the purification of water, and some may have felt that wine was more healthful or less harmful than much of the water available. However, that may be, they attributed to wine

Continued on page 12

better be safe than sorry!

GET GUARANTEED **PRESTONE** BRAND ANTI-FREEZE from... The ROGERS HARDWARE COMPANY LIMITED DISTRIBUTORS

Why buy crank-ups?



this beautiful G-E electric alarm costs you only \$4.95

NO WINDING! NO REGULATING! (WITH LUMINOUS DIAL \$5.95)

Even the most expensive spring-wound clocks can't match this modern, low-priced G-E Electric Clock for unerring accuracy, performance and convenience. And what convenience! You never wind, oil or regulate the G-E Lullaby... you never have to "crank-up" its pleasant, yet insistent alarm.

Next time you're shopping, drop into your electrical dealer's showroom and see the distinctively-styled G-E Lullaby... only \$4.95. Small Appliance Dept., Canadian General Electric Company Limited, Toronto.

GENERAL ELECTRIC CLOCKS

CANADIAN GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY LIMITED

Questions

- How did Thomas Trifler's drinking affect his own family? Value, 10 marks.
- How did Tommy Trifler's drinking affect motorists? Value, 10 marks.

(What Does It Matter, by Margaret Baker.)

(INTERMEDIATE-SENIOR LESSON)

ALCOHOL—AN AGE-OLD PROBLEM

One sometimes hears it said that because the drinking of alcohol is very old practice, it must be a very good one. Now, it is true that the use of alcoholic drinks goes back as far, perhaps, as recorded history; but this is also of several other types of human behaviour, theft, murder, slavery, and others. All these practices have a very long history, but one never hears that fact used as an argument for their approval in the mid-twentieth century. It is quite probable that when the institution of human slavery was first challenged by the consciences of men there were those who argued that there had always been slaves, and that as long as human nature remained what it was there would always be those who were owned. Such an argument sounds foolish a century after the abolition of slavery. So the matter of its long history is no recommendation for the practice of drinking today.

Alcohol, a Scourge

The story of how man's conscience has turned against beverage alcohol, is an enlightening as well as a fascinating one. It is significant that alcohol was early recognized as a scourge to mankind, and one of the race's major social problems. In a document which comes down to us from ancient Egypt, dating from about 2000 B.C., there is a passage where a wise man named Ani is giving advice to the young men of his time. Among other things, he warns them against "all the disastrous consequences of drunkenness and dissolute living." Those ancient folk knew some of the disastrous consequences even before the days of distilled spirits and high-powered motor cars.

The Bible and Strong Drink

Among ancient people, it was the Hebrews, who were most strongly and persistently outspoken against alcohol. They seem to have been most keenly aware of spiritual truths and values, and most conscious of the evils that afflict mankind. Among the sins that are condemned in the Scriptures, drunkenness ranks high. As students of the alcohol problem you should be familiar with some typical Biblical passages dealing with the subject. Here are a few:

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whoever is deceived thereby is not wise... Hear thou, my son, and be wise... be not among winebibbers." (Prov. 20: 1; 23: 19, 20)

"Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning; that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame." (Isa. 5: 11.)

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contention? who hath babbling? Who hath wounds

Throw Away Your Weekly Shopping List...

When the weather forecast says "rain today", or "continued cold with snow this afternoon", the Freezer owner doesn't worry about rushing to the neighbourhood market for food supplies. Bad weather doesn't inconvenience her one bit, because she has a variety of menus right at her fingertips.

PHILCO Freezer



A New, Giant Philco Freezer built to save hundreds of dollars on food bills. Designed for new, modern living with more leisure time, better menus... kitchen convenience never before possible. AND famous Philco features that will give many years of service... porcelain interior... counter-balanced lid... interior light... easy-lift storage baskets!

A PHILCO MODEL H-183 Holds up to 650 pounds of Frozen Foods. A sure money saver... storage space to hold a full winter's supply of food. Separate Sharp-Freeze compartment freezes a full 125 pound load of food at temperatures to 15° below zero. Really BIG savings on quantity purchases.

PHILCO MODEL GH-122—The Perfect Freezer for Any Family. Holds up to 440 pounds of Food. Three separate compartments... Sharp Freezes at temperatures to 15° below zero... Color Styled in Key Largo with plastic and chrome accessories.

Commercial Equipment Limited
Head Office — St. John, N. B.
Branches in: Moncton, Halifax, New Glasgow, Truro, Sydney

134 KENT ST. **CROCKETT and STOREY LTD.** DIAL 5434