

## The Vagabonds.

[The following is an admirable piece for a good elocutionist to read or recite to an audience.]—Ed.

We are two travellers—Roger and I;  
Roger's my dog—come here, you scamp;  
Jump for the gentleman—mind your eye!—  
Over the table—look out for the lamp!  
The rogue is growing a little old;  
Five years we've tramped through wind  
and weather,  
And slept outdoors when nights were cold,  
And ate and drank—and starved together.

We've learned what comfort is, I tell you!  
A bed on the floor, a bit of rosin,  
A fire to thaw our thumbs (poor fellow!  
The paw he holds up there's been frozen),—  
Plenty of catgut for my fiddle,  
(This outdoor business is bad for strings,)  
Then a few nice buck-wheats hot from the  
griddle  
And Roger and I set up for kings.

No thank ye, sir,—ever drink;  
Roger and I are awfully moral—  
Aren't we, Roger? See him wink!  
Well, something hot, then—we won't  
quarrel.  
He's thirsty, too—see him nod his head;  
What a pity, sir, that dogs can't talk!  
He understands every word that's said—  
And he knows good milk from water and  
chalk.

The truth is, sir, now I reflect,  
I've been so sadly given to grog,  
I wonder I've not lost the respect  
(Here's to you, sir!) even of my dog.  
But he sticks by, through thick and thin:  
And this old coat with its empty pockets,  
And rags that smell of tobacco and gin,  
He'll follow while he has eyes in his sockets.

There isn't another creature living  
Would do it, and prove, through every  
disaster,  
So fond, so faithful, and so forgiving,  
To such a miserable, thankless master!  
No, sir!—see him wag his tail and grin!  
By George! it makes my eyes just water!  
That is, there's something in this gin  
That chokes a fellow. But no matter.

We'll have some music, if you're willing,  
And Roger (hem! what a plague a cough  
is, sir.)  
Shall march a little—start, you villain!  
Stand straight! 'Bout face! Salute your  
officer!  
Put up that paw! Dress! take your rifle!  
(Some dogs have arms, you see!) now hold  
your  
Cap while the gentleman gives a trifle  
To aid a poor old patriot soldier!

March! Halt! Now show how the rebel  
shakes  
When he stands up to hear his sentence;  
Now tell us how many drams it takes  
To honour a jolly new acquaintance.  
Five yelps,—that's five; he's mighty  
knowing!  
The night's before us, fill the glasses!  
Quick, sir! I'm ill—my brain is going—  
Some brandy,—thank you—there, it passes.

Why not reform? That's easily said;  
But I've gone through such wretched  
treatment,  
Sometimes forgetting the taste of bread,  
And scarce remembering what meat meant,  
That my poor stomach's past reform:  
And there are times when, mad with  
drinking,  
I sometimes long for the something warm  
To prop a horrible inward sinking.

Is there a way to forget to think?  
At your age, sir, home, fortune, friends,  
A dear girl's love—but I took to drink!  
The same old story! You know how it ends.  
If you could have seen these classic features,—  
You needn't laugh, sir; they were not then  
Such a burning libel on God's creatures;  
I was one of our handsome men!

If you had seen her! So fair and young,  
Whose head was happy on this breast!  
If you could have heard the songs that I sung,  
When the wine went round, you wouldn't  
have guessed  
That ever I, sir, should be straying  
From door to door, with fiddle and dog,  
Ragged, penniless, and playing  
To you, to-night, for a glass of grog.

She's married since—a parson's wife;  
'Twas better for her that we should part—  
Better the soberest, proudest life  
Than a blasted home and a broken heart.

I have seen her—once; I was weak and spent  
On a dusty road; a carriage stopped:  
But little did she dream, as on she went,  
Who kissed the coin that her finger dropped.

You've set me talking, sir, I'm sorry:  
It makes me wild to think of the change!  
What do you care for a beggar's story?  
Is it amusing? You find it strange!  
I had a mother so proud of me!  
It was well she died before—do you know  
The happy spirits in heaven can see  
The ruin and wretchedness here below!

Another glass, and strong, to deaden  
This pain; then Roger and I will start;  
I wonder has he such a lumpish, leaden,  
Aching thing in place of a heart.  
He is sad sometimes, and would weep if he  
could,  
No doubt remembering things that were;  
A virtuous kennel with plenty of food,  
And himself a sober, respectable cur.

I'm better now; that glass was warming—  
You rascal! limber your lazy feet!  
We must be fiddling and performing  
For supper and bed, or starve in the street.  
Not a very gay life to lead, you think!  
But soon we shall go where lodgings are free,  
And the sleepers need neither victuals nor  
drink;  
And the sooner the better for Roger and me.

## Daily Bread in Hard Times.

"It's dreadful to live this way! I  
do wonder why God doesn't answer  
your prayer and send you some work,"  
said Mrs. Wilson.

"Are you hungry, wife? I'm sure  
I thought we had a very good break-  
fast," responded John Wilson.

"But we've nothing for dinner!"  
"But it isn't dinner-time yet, my  
wife."

"Well, I must confess I'd like to  
know what we are to have just a little  
while before dinner-time."

"God has said our bread and water  
shall be sure, but He has not promised  
that we shall know beforehand where  
it's coming from."

"Father," said little Maggie, "do  
you s'pose God knows what time we  
have dinner?"

"Yes, my dear child, I suppose He  
knows exactly that. I've done my  
best to get work, and I'll go out now  
and look about; you go to school and  
don't be the least mite afraid, Maggie.  
There'll be some dinner."

"But we're out of soap and starch,"  
said the mother.

"As for the starch, you couldn't use  
it if you had it. I'm sure I had soap  
when I washed my hands this morning,"  
said John.

"Yes, a little bit. But it's not  
enough to do the washing."

"But the washing will not come till  
next Monday. As for the starch it  
isn't one of the necessities of life."

"If I had some potatoes I could  
make some," said Mrs. Wilson mus-  
ingly.

"Well, I'm going out now to try and  
find some work. You just cast your  
burden on the Lord, mother, and go  
about your housework just as if you  
knew what was coming next, and don't  
go and take the burden right up again.  
That's the trouble with you. You can't  
trust the Lord to take as good care of  
it as you think you would, and so you  
take it up again, and go round groan-  
ing under the burden."

"Well, I do wonder He lets such  
troubles come. Here you've been out  
of work these three months, with only  
an occasional day's work, and you've  
been a faithful, conscientious Christian  
ever since I knew you."

"I've been an unfaithful, unprofit-  
able servant, and that's true, mother,  
whatever you may think of me," re-

plied John Wilson humbly. "God is  
trying our faith now. After He's  
provided for us so long, what will He  
think of us if we distrust Him now,  
just because want seems to be near,  
before ever it has touched us."

John Wilson went away to seek  
work, and spent the forenoon seeking  
vainly. God saw that there was a  
diamond worth polishing. He subjected  
His servant's faith to a strain, but it  
bore the test. I will not say that no  
questionings or painful thoughts dis-  
turbed the man as he walked homeward  
at noon. Four eager, hungry little  
children, just home from school, to find  
the table unspread, and no dinner ready  
for them; an aged and infirm parent,  
from whom he had concealed as far as  
possible all his difficulties and per-  
plexities, lest he should feel himself a  
burden in his old age, awakened to a  
realization that there was not enough  
for him and them—these were not  
pleasant pictures to contemplate, and  
all through the long, weary forenoon  
Satan had been holding them up to his  
view, and it was only by clinging to  
the Lord, as drowning men cling to the  
rope that is thrown to them, that he  
was kept from utter despondency.

"Thou knowest, O Lord, that I've  
done my best to support my family.  
My abilities are small, but I've done  
my best. Now, Lord, I'm waiting to  
see thy salvation. Appear for me!  
Let me not be put to shame.

"Increase my faith, increase my hope,  
Or soon my strength will fail."

So he prayed in his own simple fash-  
ion as he walked along.

It was all true as he had said. His  
abilities were not great. Some frivo-  
lous young people smiled at the phrase-  
ology of his prayers. But there were  
educated men and earnest women who  
were helped and strengthened by those  
very prayers. Religion had raised a  
man above mediocrity to whom nature  
had been niggardly. Without it he  
would have been a cipher in the com-  
munity.

He drew near to his own door with  
something of shrinking and dread. But  
the children rushed out to meet him  
with joyous shouts.

"Come right in, father; quick!  
We've got a splendid dinner all ready.  
We've been waiting for you, and were  
fearfully hungry."

The tired steps quickened, and the  
strongly drawn lines in the weary face  
softened to a look of cheerful question-  
ing, such as was oftenest seen there.  
He came in and stood beside his wife,  
who was leaning over the fire, dipping  
soup out of the big dinner pot with a  
ladle.

"How is this, mother?" said he.

"Why, father! Mr. Giddings has  
been over from Bristol. He came just  
after you went out. And he says a  
mistake was made in your account last  
August, which he has just found out  
by accident; he owed you fifteen  
shillings more and he paid that to me.  
So I—"

"I don't think it was by accident,  
though," said John Wilson interrupting  
her.

"Well, I thought as we had nothing  
for dinner I'd better buy some meat  
and—"

"Do you think it was accident that  
sent us that money to-day, mother?"  
persisted the thankful man.

"No, I don't think so," said his wife  
humbly; "I think it was Providence.  
And I'm thankful, I'm sure. I did try

to trust, but I'll try harder next time.  
You haven't heard the whole, though.  
Mr. Giddings wants you next Monday  
for all the week, and he thinks for all  
summer."

The grace at table was a long one,  
full of thanks and praise, but not even  
the youngest child was impatient at its  
length.—*British Workman.*

## Brevities.

THERE is a barn upon the Allegheny  
Mountains so built that the rain which  
falls upon it separates in such a man-  
ner that that which falls upon one side  
of the roof runs into a little stream  
which flows into the Susquehanna, and  
thence into the Chesapeake Bay, and  
on into the Atlantic Ocean; that which  
falls on the other side is carried into  
the Allegheny River, thence into the  
Ohio, and onward to the Gulf of Mexi-  
co. The point where the water divides  
is very small. But how different the  
course of these waters. So it happens  
with people. A very little thing  
changes the channel of their lives.  
Much depends upon the kind of tem-  
pers we have. If we are sour and ill-  
tempered, no one will love us. If we  
are kind and cheerful, we shall have  
friends wherever we go. Much de-  
pends upon the way in which we im-  
prove our school days. Much depends  
upon the kind of comrades we have,  
much upon the kind of habits we form.  
If we would have the right kind of  
life, we must watch the little things.  
We must see how one little thing af-  
fects another thing, how one little act  
takes in many others.

LAST Sabbath evening, we heard a  
young man say that he was converted  
by what he called a "hot shot," adding:  
"I was made the secretary, though un-  
converted, of a Mission Sunday-school.  
One Sabbath, while walking home  
with the superintendent, he said to me,  
'E—, you ought to be a Christian.'  
That was all he said; but he said it  
with so much real solicitude in my  
welfare, so much genuine earnestness,  
that his few words went right to my  
heart. I could not forget them, and  
never can. By their influence I was  
made a Christian." "A word fitly  
spoken is like apples of gold in pic-  
tures of silver," say we, with the wise  
man.—*Indiana Baptist.*

ONE SIN LEADS TO ANOTHER.—Do  
you know how the Suspension Bridge  
below Niagara Falls was built. The  
span is some seven hundred and fifty  
feet, and the height of the bridge two  
hundred and thirty-eight feet. How  
were the cables stretched from pier to  
pier? I will tell you. A boy's kite  
was sent up on one side of the river,  
and carried by the wind across to the  
other. To the string of the kite was  
attached a cord, and to the cord a rope.  
Thus a communication was established.  
So a single sin, even a small sin, may  
draw after it the most weighty conse-  
quences. Beware of the first sin—the  
first oath, the first glass, or petty dis-  
honesty.

A CHILD CHRISTIAN.—"I have read  
a great many books on the Evidences  
of Christianity, and most of the argu-  
ments in them I can answer satisfac-  
torily to my own mind. But the  
change I have seen in the life of my  
little daughter, in the year or two past,  
I cannot explain. There is evidence  
of some power working in her which I  
cannot understand."