

"Again I called, 'Lascar, a lantern.' Again the cobra moved, and again, thank God, the ready Lascar replied. "Lata houn, Sahib,' (I am bringing it, sir.) Light advancing flashed in, and at the noise of quick coming feet, lo! one after another its horrible coils unwound, and the grisly monster glided away from my body. The last sound that struck my sense of hearing was, 'Ya illaki samp,' (a snake.) I fainted away." That horrible cobra i-drink, it lies on the very heart of society, and threatens to destroy its life with its deadly poison. It looks sometimes like as if there was little hope of escape, but we believe God will, in His mercy, send deliverance. May it come soon!—*The Temperance Battle-Field.*

STANDING UP STIFF.

"Did he stand stiff?"
"I rather think so."
"Let me tell you how it was."
"Half past six," said Jimmie Bowles; and as he spoke, he looked at the town-clock.

There it was, with its long, gilt hand's shining bright enough in the morning light to have been arrows of gold shot from the quiver of the sun; and, catching on the old dial, they changed from rays to clock-hands, swinging slowly, steadily round.

"Time to open the store," thought Jimmie; and he crossed the street to thrust a key into the lock of the door above which was the sign,—

THOMAS PARRY.

"Mr. Parry will be here by seven, and I must have things trim," continued Jimmie in his thoughts.

Back went the shutters, and away went the broom, busily flourished in Jimmie's hands. The floor was swept, the counters dusted, the desk cleared up, a bundle of papers put on one side of the door, and a few water-pails on the other; and directly in front of the windows was stationed an empty barrel labelled "Flour," and above it an empty box labelled "Rice," and above it all a huge white placard, saying, "Goods for the Million at Hard-Time Prices."

"Now," said Jimmie, "everything is all right when Mr. Parry comes; and its only—only—five minutes of seven," giving a glance in the direction of the town clock. "I am early. Now, Mr. Thomas Parry, who sells goods for the million at the best prices he can get for them, may put in his appearance when he pleases. My! there he is, already, turning the corner!"

Mr. Parry was indeed turning the corner. He was a short, fat man, with an easy, comfortable gait, and turned the corner nice as a bicycle.

Fat men are not always sweet tempered, though, if some of them are among the kindest-natured folks in the world; and Mr. Parry, while a very comfortable-looking man, was not a very comfortable-feeling man.

Jimmie understood all this.

"Things all right, boy?" he asked.

"All right, I think, sir."

"Come into the back-room in a few moments."

"Yes, sir."

"What does he want of me?" thought Jimmie. "I must prepare for a blowin', I suppose."

There was no "blowin'" that morning; on the contrary, when Jimmie

went into the back-room, Mr. Parry was more affable than usual. He actually asked Jimmie to sit down. Then hemmed and hawked, and coughed very apologetically, as if about to address a king, instead of a store-boy. As he commenced to speak, he brought forth a basket of black bottles.

"You know, Jimmie,—hem—you know times are hard. A man can't along yesterday, and he was peddling these—theo—bottles. Only ale, you know; nice for invalids. I want you—if—if anybody comes in and calls for a glass—to—let 'em have a little. It will bring in a penny. That is what you are to do."

Was he? Jimmie didn't know about that. His face flushed red, and then turned pale.

Sell that!

The idea!

Would he?

All agitation was over in a moment. He straightened up and stood erect in the attitude of protestation; and it seemed as if the spirit of his father (an old soldier in the late war), the spirit of his grandfather (a soldier in the war of 1812), the spirit of his great-grandfather, (a soldier in the Revolution) all stood up inside of Jimmie, all protesting and rebelling.

What wonder if he stood pretty stiff.

"Mr. Parry," said he, "I will do anything reasonable to please you; but I promised my mother, when I left home, that I would not sell liquor."

Mr. Parry hardly knew how to take this. He was silent, and then he began to stammer out a reply. He hesitated, then he started again. He fumed like a beer-bottle when the cork has been loosened, and yet there is not room for the foam to escape; then, in a moment he fairly raved.

"Dreadful particular you are all at once! You need not stand up so stiff! So you think you are better than your master! Well, if you are, you had better leave, or I might contaminate your morals. And if you can't do as I wish, you may leave; and you may go at once."

"Leave!" "Go." These two words struck Jimmie like two bullets.

"Leave!" That meant no work, no money to buy clothes, no money to settle board-bills.

Jimmie said nothing, and went into the outer store.

A stranger was there, trimly, neatly dressed, with a business air.

"Have you any matches? Something good to light fire with;" asked the man.

"Yes," thought Jimmie; "match, shavings, kerosene, powder, glycerine, everything combustible, in those black bottles." He did not say it, however.

"Mr. Parry, a customer is here."

At Jimmie's announcement, Mr. Parry bustled out, looking as if he had been hanging in a furnace. He handed Jimmie the money due him for services, and then waited on the stranger.

Jimmie left the store.

It seemed queer to Jimmie, going down street that morning an hour ago with a whistle as cheery as a canary's song over the first green chickweed, and now sauntering up the street so heavy-hearted. He took a long and rather unhappy walk. However he had done his duty.

"Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes," struck the town clock eight times

as if in response, ringing out the last "yes" with a decided ring.

"Ah! good-morning again."

Jimmie turned.

It was the stranger whom he saw in the store.

"Are you—are you out of a place?"

"Yes, sir."

"Just left one, haven't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"I thought so, from what I saw. Why did you leave?"

"I wouldn't sell liquor, sir."

"I didn't I hear Mr Parry say something about your standing up stiff?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, you are just the boy for me." Jimmie's eyes flashed.

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Why I keep an apothecary store; and I am continually pestered by nuisances begging for "a drop," pretending to be sick suddenly, or else anxious for an unknown friend wanting liquor. I want somebody who can stand up stiff, and not sell without the best reason."

"I will do what I can for you, sir."

"All right. I am without a boy, and you may begin any time."

"I will begin this morning, sir."

When the clock struck eight again, it had a merry sound to Jimmie's ears, as if lifting up his voice triumphantly. If Mr. Thomas Parry had gone by that evening, and looked into the apothecary store, he would have seen blue bottles, and yellow bottles, and black bottles, and red bottles, all standing up straight, prim, and stiff on the shelves. The object, though, that could stand up stiffest, was the boy behind the counter.

Hats off to the temperance boy that could stand stiff!—*Well-Spring.*

DOES IT PAY?

DOES it pay to have fifty working men poor and ragged in order to have one saloon-keeper dress in broadcloth and flush of money?

Does it pay to have those fifty workingmen live on bone soup and half rations, in order that one saloon-keeper may flourish on roast turkey and champagne?

Does it pay to have the mothers and children of twenty families dressed in rags, starved into the resemblance of emaciated scarecrows, and live in hovels, in order that the saloon-keeper's wife may dress in satin and her children grow fat and hearty and live in a bow window parlour?

Does it pay to have ten smart, active, and intelligent boys transformed into thieves to enable one man to lead an easy life by selling them liquor?

Does it pay to give one man, for \$15, a license to sell liquor, and then spend \$20,000 on the trial of another man for buying that liquor and committing murder under its influence?

Does it pay to have one thousand homes blasted, ruined, defiled, and turned into hells of discord and misery in order that one wholesale liquor dealer may amass a large fortune?

Does it pay to keep men in the penitentiaries and prisons and hospitals, and in the lunatic asylums, at the expense of the honest, industrious taxpayers, in order that a few capitalists may grow richer by the manufacture of whiskey, and by swindling the government out of three-fourths of the revenue tax on the liquor that they make?

Does it pay to permit the existence

of a traffic which only results in crime, poverty, misery, and death, and which never did, never does, never can, and never will do any good?

It never pays to do wrong, your sin will find you out, whether others find you out or not; the sin knows where you are, and will keep you posted of that fact. It don't pay.—*Exchange.*

A LITTLE PHILOSOPHER.

THE days are short, and the nights are long,
And the wind is nipping cold;
The tasks are hard, and the sums are wrong,
And the teachers often scold.
But Johnny McCree,
O what cares he
As he whistles along the way?
"It will all come right
By to-morrow night."
Says Johnny McCree to-day.

The plums are few, and the cake is plain,
The shoes are out at the toe;
For money, you look in the purse in vain—
It was all spent long ago.
But Johnny McCree,
O what cares he
As he whistles along the street?
Would you have the blues
For a pair of shoes
While you have a pair of feet?

The snow is deep, there are paths to break,
But the little arm is strong,
And work is play, if you'll only take
Your work with a bit of a song.
And Johnny McCree
O what cares he
As he whistles along the road?
He will do his best,
And will leave the rest
To the care of his Father, God.

The mother's face, it is often sad—
She scarce knows what to do;
But at Johnny's kiss, she is bright and glad—
She loves him, and wouldn't you!
For Johnny McCree,
O what cares he
As he whistles along the way?
The trouble will go,
And "I told you so,"
Our brave little John will say.
—*Harper's Young People.*

TRAINING CHARACTER.

IF somebody should give me a diamond to carry to Europe, I can know exactly how much would be lost to the world were

I to drop it into the sea; but if a seed should be given me, I could only regard it with awe as containing concealed within it the food of untold generations. That is the difference between looking at the truth as a diamond or as a seed—as final or germinal.

In all training of character, continuity and economy must be supreme. The notion that character is spontaneous is held by most people in the earlier portion of their lives, and is wrong. When they discover this, nine tenths change to the other extreme. This is wrong, too. Hosts of young men think their character will form of itself, and that they will necessarily become better as they grow older. Hosts of old men believe that their character is fixed, and that it is impossible for them to become better. Such beliefs are foolish. People are also wrong in thinking that they can put off their bad traits and put on good traits. The old failures can not be thus transformed; but out of the old habits new can be formed. This is what many a poor creature needs to know. We must make what we are to be out of what we are.

The greatest heroes the world has ever produced have been those who have done the most good in it.