



Tobacco Catechism.

THE COST OF TOBACCO.

(By Julia Colman, National Temperance Society, New York.)

LESSON IV.

Q.—If tobacco does so much mischief, why do people use it?

A. Because, as they say, it makes them 'feel good.'

Q.—How do you account for the good feeling?

A.—The nervos when deranged and diseased by tobacco, feel bad, but a little more tobacco stupifies and quiets them for a while.

Q.—Some people will ask, 'what, then, is tobacco made for?' How will you answer them?

A.—If I do not know what tobacco is made for, that is no reason why I should eat it, or use it in any way.

Q.—Does the use of tobacco cost much?

A.—Not at first; and the user fancies that it never will cost him much; but the appetite demands more and more, till it sometimes costs him hundreds of dollars a year.

Q.—How much is spent in the United States for tobacco?

A.—It is estimated at eighty millions of dollars a year or more.

The 'Black Swan's' Temperance Sermon.

George Wilson was a true Band of Hope boy, and being naturally of a kind and generous disposition soon made friends wherever he went. Although he had a great many lessons to prepare for school, he attended the weekly Band of Hope meeting most regularly, and, what was more wonderful still, took an active part in those meetings. The choice of his readings and recitations showed how dear the cause of temperance was to his young heart; while the happy, earnest manner in which they were delivered aroused the interest of his hearers.

One afternoon, on his way home from school, George Wilson called to see his Aunt Jessie, who resided at the opposite end of the town from where his parents lived. Right across from her house stood a large public-house called the 'Black Swan.' As George passed on, he involuntarily raised his eyes to the sign above. The picture represented a black swan sailing majestically on the surface of a large stream. On either side of the bright, sparkling water grew tall rushes, while overhead the blue sky revealed itself here and there through the fleecy clouds. How cool and happy the swan looked! George Wilson wished with all his heart that the frequenters of that tavern were as happy and innocent. When he again passed the 'Black Swan,' on his way home George heard the jingle of glasses and the clink of money as it dropped into the publican's till, and longed for the time when he would be a man and better able to fight the giant — Strong Drink.

Several nights after the above incident had occurred George read the following couplets:

'Water sweet, and clear and cool,
Has no cruel chains for me.

Water, sweet and clear and cool,
Makes no man a slave or fool.'

'That's capital,' he exclaimed, 'and oh! — Yes, I'll risk it.'

'What's this, now, George?' asked Mrs. Wilson, looking up from her sewing as she spoke.

In his momentary excitement he forgot that his mother was beside him, but answered her question by reading the couplets aloud, a crimson glow overspread his face as he continued, 'An idea has just now oc-

curred to my mind that Mr. Kemp's 'Black Swan,' could preach a splendid temperance sermon if these lines could only be put into its mouth. It seems to me they've been written for that very purpose.'

'I don't see how you could accomplish that without getting into trouble,' answered Mrs. Wilson.

He was clever with his pen and pencil, so when Saturday came he remained busily occupied in the small apartment he called his study. His mother wondered why he was not enjoying himself out of doors as usual, but when she caught sight of his happy face she did not trouble on his account.

The next time George Wilson visited his Aunt Jessie he carried with him a small parcel, carefully concealed under his jacket. Before leaving, he surprised Mrs. Stewart by asking if he might have the use of his Uncle Jack's ladder for a few minutes.

'Whatever do you want a ladder for?' You're not going to be up to housebreaking, surely?'

'No, no,' laughed George, 'there's no mischief intended, I assure you. Will you please let me have the ladder?'

'Oh, yes; you know I trust you, George.' Mrs. Stewart handed him the key of the cellar, and giving him also a lighted candle, said, 'There you are now, You've been in my cellar often and will easily find what you want.'

George was soon inside, and hastily untied his parcel. It contained a good sized placard on which certain words were neatly and boldly printed. He coated the back of it with extra strong hold-fast gum, and then went to see if the coast was clear on the opposite side of the street. Satisfied with the result of his outlook, he returned, and proceeded to carry out the remaining part of his scheme. To set his ladder, mount it, and affix his placard firmly to the bill of the 'Black Swan,' was the work of a very few minutes.

Mr. Kemp, the owner of the 'The Black Swan,' lived above the shop. Next morning, after breakfast, Mrs. Kemp, in passing the parlour window, observed several persons standing gazing up at their sign, and who, instead of entering thereafter, turned away smiling. Thinking they must be strangers, she waited and watched a little longer. Soon Mr. Martin and Mr. Elliott, two well-known townsmen, passed down the street. Behind them came Sandy Robb, whom she knew would not pass their door. As he stepped on to the pavement in front of the shop he looked up, and in a minute or two his loud laugh caused Mr. Martin and Mr. Elliott to turn round in time to hear the following comments:—

'That's a good joke, too, Who in the world has had the courage to do that, I wonder?'

When Sandy Robb was out of sight, the two men retraced their steps and read:—

'Water, sweet and clear and free,
Has no cruel chains for me.

Water, sweet and clear and cool,
Makes no man a slave or fool.'

'That's the work of some plucky teetotaler, sure enough,' said Mr. Martin.

'Yes, but it is doubtful if that plan will benefit any of those poor deluded mortals,' answered Mr. Elliott, with a significant shake of his head.

Mrs. Kemp witnessed this proceeding and overheard Sandy Robb's words before he entered the bar, and could scarcely restrain her curiosity. By the time she was free from household duties, and ready to go downstairs a crowd had assembled on the street. Mrs. Kemp now dreaded lest her own husband was the cause. But when she reached the back parlour she saw that he was busy serving, quite unconscious of what was going on outside. Soon Sergeant Munro's well-known voice was heard exclaiming—

'Good-morning, John, you've been improving your sign, I see.'

'My sign,' he repeated in surprise. 'I've had nothing done to my sign for over two years. I've found it to be attractive enough, seeing my business is still steadily increasing.'

Turning round as he spoke, Mr. Kemp caught sight of the people outside, and was about to go to the door, when the Sergeant, in his commanding voice, cried, 'Attend to your business, please, and let me have my brandy and soda.'

Thus reminded, Mr. Kemp apologized, and waited until his wife came to relieve him of his duties. No sooner did Mrs. Kemp appear, than out he went to see what was going on. A loud laugh greeted his appearance, but, nothing daunted, Mr. Kemp stepped on to the road, to survey his premises.

He instantly caught sight of George Wilson's placard, and, as he read the words, his color came and went.

'The Black Swan' is preaching a grand temperance sermon to-day, and no one dare say he doesn't practice what he preaches,' observed one of the by-standers, loud enough for Mr. Kemp to hear.

The poor publican re-entered his shop wearing an injured air, but he treated the matter more lightly than anyone expected. Mrs. Kemp was furious, and would have had the card taken down immediately. But her husband thought it better to wait till the crowd had dispersed. Many were the conjectures as to who could do such a daring thing, but the publican boldly asserted that it would do him no harm. 'Some teetotal fool has been at the bottom of it, no doubt, and let who will enjoy the joke. A poor world, indeed, this would be, if teetotalers had their will. But I, for one, am not afraid of their influence.'

Mr. Kemp had reason to change his mind, however; when, at the end of the following week, Richard Gibson, his best customer, after settling his usual score triumphantly exclaimed—

'Now, sir, that's the last money I ever intend paying you. I'm to be a fool no longer.'

'Who said you were a fool?' asked Mr. Kemp, in surprise.

'I say it myself.' Look at me and see if I haven't been a fool to spend my hard-earned wages on that which brings me no return save misery and want. In future I intend spending my money to better advantage.'

'So you've turned teetotal! Well, well, anyone after you, Dick. These temperance bigots will hold nice rejoicings over you,' sneered the publican.'

'Temperance bigots! Whom do you mean? I haven't seen one of them,' replied Richard.

'Oh, indeed; then who induced you to sign the pledge?'

'No one, sir. I haven't signed yet. I see you don't believe me, but it is true all the same. The only pledge I agreed to is a secret one between my Maker and myself, by whose strength I hope to keep true to my promise. The only temperance bigot I know of that has had anything to do in the matter is your own black swan. I never thought about the cause of the misery we are all living in at home until I read the words which someone must have fastened to its bill. Now, sir, continued Richard, I'll bid you good-bye.'

Facing, his old associates, who had been listening in amazement, to his conversation with the publican, he said brightly, 'Farewell, mates!'

'Water, sweet and clear and cool,
Makes no man a slave or fool.'

Richard Gibson then turned and left the 'Black Swan,' never to enter it again. Despite of the many unkind prophecies, that Richard would find it impossible to live without whiskey, he has bravely kept his resolution.

If George Wilson could have seen the change in the Gibson's home he would have felt more than rewarded for the care and anxiety he experienced in obeying the dictates of his conscience. He felt convinced that God had put the thought into his heart, and so his work was not in vain. Mrs. Gibson and the children are now well cared for, and each face beams with happiness. Their youngest boy, Harry, is never tired of hearing his father tell the story of 'The Black Swan' that preached a temperance sermon.—'League Journal.'

Revive Them.

'There is great need of a revival of old-fashioned temperance. The antique in other things has become fashionable; old-fashioned houses are in great demand, and old-fashioned furniture is much sought for. Old-fashioned temperance laid great stress upon individual appeal for total abstinence. One by one the pioneer temperance army was recruited as pledged total abstainers. These pledged recruits were obtained in large numbers in meetings, held in churches, halls, school-houses, and lodge-rooms, wherein the reason for total abstinence was given by a careful and thorough analysis of the evil nature and effects of strong drink itself. In this respect the old-fashioned temperance meetings were a most helpful school of education to multitudes by whom they were attended. Let them be revived.'—'National Temperance Advocate.'