

stacle in the pursuit of his own ruin, but simply an easy-going man of social impulses, voluptuous tastes and weak will, who, in the presence of temptation, yielded almost without a struggle; but when the temptation was removed found it easier not to drink whiskey than to go out of his way to procure it.

It is because human society is largely made up of such men that we long and labor to close every open grog-shop by the strong arm of the law, feeling that else it is mockery to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." What will be the glory of that day, when, instead of a little town like Newton Centre, the whole country shall have "no license"?—*Mr. E. Winslow in the Temperance Advocate.*

### HOW MR. ISHAM CHANGED HIS MIND.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

Mr. William Isham was a wealthy New York grain dealer, who had come up into New England, and bought a quiet summer retreat for himself and family—a large and picturesque hill farm, whereon were a trout-brook, a pickerel pond, partridge coverts, and a substantial, roomy house, quite comfortable, though somewhat old, and large enough to accommodate the parties he annually brought up with him from the city for the hunting and the fishing. Mr. Isham was a pleasant, social man, who always had a cheery word for his new rural neighbors, and asked so many questions about farming stock and crops that he became very popular in that region.

One mild April morning, as his neighbor, Farmer Stoddard, was driving past "Isham Farm," he was surprised to see the owner come bowing and smiling towards the gate. "I ran up from New York last night to see if it was beginning to thaw out here," he said, "and to carry out a little project which I have had in my head all winter. I have thought that, in a place like this, some sort of business which would make a local market for the products of the neighboring farms would be a great benefit to the owners. It has occurred to me that I would put up two or three cider mills and a distillery or two over on Stony Brook. That would make a demand for all the superfluous grain hereabouts, as well as for all the apples which I hear are frequently left in great quantities on the ground to decay in the orchards."

"There were cider mills and a distillery here in town when I was a lad," replied Farmer Stoddard, gravely.—"Is that so?" queried Mr. Isham, still chirk and pleasant in his manner. "Did they do a good business?" "I will show you what they did if you will step into my buggy and ride with me two or three miles out to my brother's."

"All right," replied Mr. Isham. "I am glad to go with you. I thought I would speak to a few of the leading farmers about this project of mine, and you are the first one I have met since my return. I don't know that I have ever met your brother whom you are taking me to see."—"Quite likely not," replied Mr. Stoddard. "He owns a farm in a retired locality in the north part of the town. He was chosen overseer of the poor at our last town meeting, and all our paupers are now quartered there."

"Here we are," said the intelligent, thrifty farmer, as he drew up his sleek bay filly in front of a long, low, red house, on the south side of which a dozen or so wretched samples of humanity were out sunning themselves. They looked tolerably clean and well kept, but were very decrepit, and gazed out from sore, red eyes set in very sodden and bloated faces. One man and one woman were insane. The woman, who was known as "Aunt Huldah," was greatly taken with the handsome, finely-dressed, portly city man, and ran after him, as he, with Mr. Stoddard, walked through the door yard toward the large barns, calling on her fellow paupers to "see what a beautiful lover" had come for her at last.

"Poor, demented creature!" said Mr. Isham pityingly, as he passed through a gateway and escaped from her repeated and vehement protestations of affection.—"It's a sorrowful sight, indeed," said Mr. Stoddard. "She lived near the distillery I was speaking to you about. In her younger days she used to board the help then employed about it. By degrees she herself came to like the cider brandy made there, and of which nearly everybody in the vicinity drank as freely as water. Finally the doctors said her brain had become paralyzed. She is harmless, and so is kept here rather than at the asylum, where for a year or two she was homesick and very unhappy. She has no near relatives and, of course, no property."

"This is Captain Ball, one of our former business men," continued Farmer Stoddard, pausing before a thin, bent, pallid-faced old man, who was sawing wood in a weakly way, in front of the woodshed. "When I was a boy the Captain carried on a driving business."—"Yes, yes, to be sure," spoke up the poor creature, in a wheezing voice, vainly endeavoring to straighten himself up. "I owned a distillery and did do a driving business, and no mistake—but somehow I lost money. My wife used to say that I was myself the best wholesale customer I had. Perhaps I was, for I never went dry in those days—although I've had to since I came here. He! he! A good many people used to say that the old still was no benefit to the town. Perhaps it wasn't, but it made a market for what was raised about here. I tell you, I made a prime article of cider brandy, and corn

whiskey, too; yet there were always some folks in town that cursed me for it."

"Where are the men who worked for you in your distillery, your neighbors who had money invested in it, and those in this region who were the largest consumers of your fine brands of whiskey and cider brandy?" asked Farmer Stoddard in his grave, quiet way.—"He! he!" sickly laughed the Captain. "Those who are not in the burying ground are here, waiting to be carried there."

"It is a fact, Mr. Isham," said Overseer Stoddard, coming up now and greeting his brother, and after an introduction, "that every one of these 'boarders' of mine here was brought here directly or indirectly by that old distillery. That little hunchback girl over there by the door is a grandchild of the captain with whom you were just now talking. His only son married a daughter of 'Aunt Huldah.' They were both burned to death one midnight not many years ago, through the carelessness of the drunken husband, who set the house on fire. The poor little creature, who was badly mutilated by burns, but was saved alive, is the unfortunate offspring of that union. Oh, it was hell upon earth over there in the 'Still Village' when I was a boy! At last the more respectable part of the community would stand such work no longer, and one dark night the distillery was leveled to the ground. The old captain there was promptly and fully paid for his loss—in fact, much more than the property was worth—but he soon drank up the money, as well as the rest of his property, and he, and his sole living descendant are here to-day."

"I am a man of the world, and have seen something of the ill-effects of rum in my day, especially in the various forms that come across one's path in a great city, but not exactly in this light," said Mr. Isham, as he and Farmer Stoddard were driving homeward. "I like this old town, however, and really want to do something to benefit it in the way of business."—"Build a cheese-factory for us," suggested Farmer Stoddard.—"Good," cried Mr. Isham. "And what is more, I will start a vinegar-making establishment. Your rich Vermont cheese and pure cider-vinegar will find a ready market in New York."

And so to-day the gracious cereals that are raised in the fertile meadows and plains in the old town of W—, feed the sleek, Juno-eyed cows, that graze on the rich pasture-fields of its hillsides, and the luscious milk goes into the best of cheese; while the cartloads of apples that were formerly left to decay in the large and prolific orchard, are utilized by the vinegar-factory. The farmers are more prosperous than ever, and bless the day when the wealthy New York merchant first came to pass his summer there, and put a little vim into them, withal. They are also thankful to good Farmer Stoddard's instrumentality in biasing Mr. Isham's projects for their benefit.—*Church and Home.*

### Our Casket.

#### BITS OF TINSEL.

"Did the deceased die under suspicious circumstances?" asked a coroner of a rural witness. "Naw, he didn't; he died in the water, under the ice."

One day Jessie was sitting in her grandpa's lap, and while sitting there, noticed that his head was bald on top. She said: "O, Ranpa, your head's pecking froo!"

"I don't say all I think," remarked Brown, when pressed for his opinion of the representative of his district. "I should think you might," replied Fogg, "and not be pressed for time either."

"I return the inclosed manuscript," wrote the editor of a religious weekly, "simply because I am so full at present." The contributor replied that when the editor's toot was over he would be glad to submit the manuscript again.

"What is the matter with the baby?" asked a lady of a little girl, whose baby brother she had understood to be ailing. "Oh, nothin' much," was the answer. "He's only hatchin' teeth."

Two little boys witnessed a balloon ascension for the first time. "O, look! look!" exclaimed the younger. "What is that?" "It's a b'loon," replied the elder. "What takes it up so fast?" "Gas." "What is gas?" "Why, gas is—is—is melted wind."

"I have neither time nor inclination to pass paregorics on the deceased," remarked a funeral orator.

"Panegyrics," corrected a parson present.

"As you please, sir," remarked the orator, stiffly: "The words are anonymous."

"Gentlemen of the jury," said an Irish lawyer, "it will be for you to say whether the defendant shall be allowed to come into court with unblushing footsteps, with a cloak of hypocrisy in his mouth, and draw three bullocks out of my client's pockets with impunity."

"Yes," said the young clergyman, "I have always said to myself I would marry that girl if I could, and now I am going to do it. But it is to another fellow she is to be wedded, I am sorry to say. The only consolation I get out of the affair will be the fee."