

away from the home so generously provided for him. During these last eighteen years, he has been living the same vagrant, wandering life—first with natives, then with foreigners, till all alike have been wearied of him.

It is now two years since I first met him, and I shall never forget his figure. It was on the day I first landed in the island. His short form flitted along, barefooted, with an old pair of worn-out trousers, and shirt and hat to match, a stick in his hand, and an old basket under his arm—that was all. As I looked at him, how I longed to tell him of our heavenly Father, who will save to the uttermost, who will welcome the prodigal, even in the eleventh hour, with joy to His home again. But, no! he seemed dead to all this. For a long time I had him in my home, but he would never speak on religion. He would pour forth a flood of elegant talk and choice language on medicine or any other subject, but he was off at the mention of religion. Twice, shortly before he died, after praying with him, the tears stood in his eyes, and he remarked, "Oh! I have been an idiot all my life; I was never taught like you." But it soon passed away, and my last visit was, I think, the most unsatisfactory. He entreated a captain who visited him to bring him, for old acquaintance sake, one more drop of gin, adding, "You know the ruling passion is strong in death." And so passed away on May 2nd one with whom it is hoped the world has few to compare; one who from a great height sunk almost to the lowest depth of degradation it is possible for man to conceive.

And now, why do I tell this story to you, readers? For two reasons—first, that I may urge upon you with all the earnestness of which I am capable, that I may entreat you, as you love your parents, home, and dear ones there; as you have regard to your own peace and well-being, as you value your immortal souls and love Him who bought them with His precious blood, and as you hope for heaven hereafter, avoid that by which this highly educated doctor fell, hate it with the bitterest hatred, turn from it as you would from him whose agent it is to ruin men both here and hereafter, flee from the sparkling wine-cup as you would from the serpent's bite and the adder's sting. Seek safety as the doctor wished he had done at the last, in loving and serving Jesus Christ; in the consecration of our fresh young hearts to Him who loves you and gave Himself for you.

Then, secondly, cannot we all, even th-

youngest, become missionaries in our homes, in the school, among our play-fellows, everywhere, by urging others to join the Band of Hope or some other such noble society which seeks to save men from the curse of drink? But let us not stop there; let us tell them of Jesus, the children's Friend, the children's Saviour, who alone can save us for ever, can give us joy and peace and every blessing here, and life everlasting beyond the grave. I have written unto you, little children, that you may be strong and overcome the Wicked One, whether in the form of strong drink or any other guise in which he may see fit to attack you.

The Era of Novels.

A writer in the *Princeton Review* says truly, "This may well be styled the era of novels, and of base and worthless novels at that." As a result he adds: "We are coming upon a public having no mental muscle with which to lay hold on truth, caring nothing for our standard English Literature, taking no interest in theology or the truth of God, and going to church, if at all, to be entertained rather than instructed. We are training up a generation by the reading of books filled with pretended facts, which are yet contrary to the nature of things, of men, and of God; with a morality not of God, a religion not of Christ, and a spirit infused of mammon and fashion rather than of the Holy Ghost; and in so training them, we are destroying all taste for that which is true and Christ-like, and almost barring the possibility of their becoming the powerful thinkers, and the earnest, practical workers, which the exigencies of the Church demand for its mission."

All this is sadly true. The effect of this trashy reading upon young minds, is disastrous in many respects. In the first place, it crowds out a better kind, consuming time in which they should be accumulating information of solid worth. What a boy or girl needs to know, is what few novels can teach. Take the great mass even of religious fiction—and that which is circulating among us, may be counted by the hundred thousand volumes, and how little of permanent value does it ever impart! One story obliterates the memory of another, and the result is scarcely a matter of regret. There is very little that is worth remembering. The mind would become only a garret or lumber-room if it were to retain it all. It