

Dr. Samuel Johnson on Wine

(By A. J. H. Crespi, in 'Alliance News.')

How important it is not to prescribe alcohol for the aged and infirm! Some of my readers may recall those memorable lines in Boswell's 'Life of Johnson,' when the latter was near the end of his pilgrimage. Johnson's life had been one of continual illness, his temptations and trials had been many, and his surroundings far from good, while the customs of his age permitted greater licence than is now tolerated in the higher walks of life.

'Then,' said Johnson, when his physician told him that death was near, 'I will take no more physic—not even my opiates, for I have prayed that I may render up my soul to God unclouded.' In this resolution he persevered, and at the same time used only the weakest kinds of sustenance. Being pressed by Mr. Windham to take somewhat more generous nourishment, lest too low a diet should have the very effect he dreaded, by debilitating his mind, he answered, 'I will take anything but inebriating sustenances.'

And thus that great and good man—for he was both, despite much warring of the flesh against the spirit—passed away, his mind clear, his heart at rest, and the fear of death, which for years had haunted him, mercifully dispelled at the last, and the peace of God—for which he had yearned so long and prayed so earnestly, but, as it seemed, ineffectually—granted him in large measure when most needed. Cheerfully and calmly he went to his grave, not soothed by opiates nor stupefied by alcohol, and we rejoice to believe that in the quiet pastures beside the still waters of comfort he has received his reward.

It is interesting to remember that he was for many years an uncompromising enemy of wine, and that he was, in his later years, firm in his preference of water. 'As we drove back to Ashbourn,' says Boswell, 'Dr. Johnson recommended to me, as he had often done, to drink water only. For, said he, you are then sure not to get drunk; whereas if you drink wine, you are never sure.' And this was not the only matter in which he was in advance of his contemporaries, and in advance of most of ours, too.

The Mill by the Rivulet.

(From 'Rallying Songs for Young Teetotalers.')

(As they sing the words 'Clip Clap' the children should clap hands in unison.)  
Mrs. Dana Shindler. (adapted.)

The mill by the rivulet evermore sounds,  
Clip! Clap!

By day and by night goes the miller his rounds,  
Clip! Clap!

He grinds us the corn, to make nourishing bread.

And when we have that we are daintily fed,  
Clip Clap! Clip Clap! Clip Clap!

The wheel quickly turns and then round goes the stone,  
Clip Clap!

And grinds us the wheat which the farmer has sown,  
Clip Clap!

The baker then bakes us fine biscuit and cake,

We're glad that the baker such nice things can make.  
Clip Clap! Clip Clap! Clip Clap!

But when people say 'Make the grain into drink,'  
Clip Clap!

There's a change in the sound of the mill wheel,  
I think, Clip Clap!

When they say 'Rum is good, let it freely flow.'

Then the mill seems to say 'You are speaking,  
you know.' Clap trap! Clap trap!  
Clap trap!

The drink bill of Great Britain just published shows that the Englishman drinks 2.41 gallons of alcohol a year.

Correspondence

Shinimicas, N.S.

Dear Editor,—I like your 'Messenger' very much. Papa has taken it for me three years. I have two brothers. One is five and a half years, the other three years old. I go to school and like my teacher very much. We live twenty miles from Amherst. VANCE D. A. (aged 8.)

Hamilton, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I don't have to go a block to get to school. I have a cat and I had a bird, but the cat killed it. AGNES F. (aged 9.)

Northport.

Dear Editor,—My brother takes the 'Messenger,' and I like it very well. My father takes the 'Daily Witness' and thinks it is the best paper in Canada. LORNE CAMPBELL.

Sunderland, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I have no brothers and no sisters. I live near the village of Sunderland. There are four churches, one school and some stores. DEVENA (aged 7.)

Pender Island, B.C.

Dear Editor,—Last summer I went to Victoria, with my father and brother. We went by the way of Sydney. My brother and I rowed part of the way. We passed by many little islands. When we got near Sydney, it was rather rough. We went in to land and ate our lunch and rested. Then we got into the boat again and in a short time reached Sydney. We went into a store, and stayed a while and then went out for a walk. When we came back, the train was just coming in, and in a little while we were on our way to Victoria. That night I went with my father to see two of my friends and next afternoon we returned home again. NELLIE.

Alice, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I have made a quilt, and it has a hundred blocks. Now I am making a larger quilt. I have two brothers and two sisters. We have Sabbath School all summer in our church. We have a nice organ, too. I love to hear the hymns played on it. FLORENCE M. (aged 10.)

Middlefield, N.S.

Dear Editor,—We have six plants in the school-room all summer; shamrock, rose-ivy, youth and old age, two geraniums. Our teacher got twenty pictures to put up in the school-room. We have preaching every two weeks. JESSIE C. D.

Middlefield, N.S.

Dear Editor,—We keep a hotel. I have three sisters and two brothers. One sister is married in New York. One brother is twenty-five years old, and he works in the gold mines at Malega. Jessie Dunn is my friend. She lives one mile from me. LIZZIE K. (aged 10.)

Studholm, N.B.

Dear Editor,—I am a little girl (10 years old.) I go to school every day. We have a Union Sabbath School here. My uncle is superintendent, and my papa is one of the teachers. The teachers give a psalm (or other scriptures) to their classes to learn, and repeat in turn. But some of the boys think they are too large, I guess, to learn Bible verses. But I don't think we ought to get to old for that. What do you think about it? H. G. G.

The older we get, the more we need to have God's word in our hearts. The younger we are, the easier it is to learn.

Dunn's Valley, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I live away among the hills of Algoma, on a farm. I have two brothers and two sisters, and a great many cousins, and one grandma. Most of my cousins and grandma lives in Grey County. There are quite a number of mines and camps here, and we live seventeen miles from a railway, and twenty miles from a town. I get the 'Messenger' in Sunday-school, and like it very much. I have two aunts out in Rossland, British Columbia. MAGGIE M. (aged 13.)

Alvinston, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I have three sisters and one brother. My papa has taken the 'Messenger' for four years, and intends taking it next year. I am a little girl seven years old, and I like going to school very much. BARBARA E.

Portneuf, Que.

Dear Editor,—This summer I was away at a place about twelve miles from here. My father was helping to put up a large mill there, and I kept house for him. A nice river flowed past the mill, and there are splendid falls. We could hear the noise of the falls all the time. I used to go out on the river a good deal. I spent nearly all my holidays there, but the riding home shakes one up a lot. NELLIE F. (aged 13.)

West Hall, Man.

Dear Editor,—I like reading your paper very well, I could never be without it again. I have a brother eight years old, and a sister four years old. My Sunday-school teacher sent me this paper, and I enjoy reading the letters very much. It is a prairie country here, so we have a great many fires. WILLIAM L. G. (aged 12.)

Orillia.

Dear Editor,—I live about half a mile from Sunday-school, in South Orillia. We have taken the 'Messenger' about two years, and we like it very much. ROSE W. (aged 7.)

Jessopville, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I live on a farm. I am only five years old, and have not started school yet. I can read all the first book myself. I have three kitties named Molly, Tibber and Silver. I had a dear old doggie named Collie. I used to have such fun with him, but Uncle Joseph took him away, and I was so very sorry. I have four little dolls, named Beautie, Rosie, Minnie and Darkie, and we have lots of fun together. I have no brothers or sisters, but I have a papa and mamma who read all the little letters to me out of the 'Messenger.' MAGGIE S. W. (aged 5.)

London.

Dear Editor,—We have taken the 'Northern Messenger' for nine years, and enjoy it very much. We would not miss it for anything. We had a whole lot of soldiers go away from this city, to fight with the Boers. Every one here wanted to go. The streets were crowded with people seeing them away. I was going for a bugler, but they said I was too small. ALLAN B.

Moncton, N.B.

Dear Editor,—I live in the city of Moncton, in the providence of New Brunswick. The inhabitants of the city number about 10,000. There are many fine buildings in our city. The new Intercolonial Depot which was built in 1898, is very nice, and also the I. C. R. general offices. We have two beautiful school buildings, the Victoria and the Aberdeen High School. I go to the Aberdeen. There are eight hundred scholars in that one building. We all march to the Assembly Hall in the morning, for the opening exercises. There is a piano in the hall, and the High School boys have an orchestra, and they play while we all sing, so you will know that we make a great noise. I like the 'Messenger' very much, and enjoy the stories in it. This is my first year, but I hope to take it a good many years. HARRY C. M. (aged 10.)

Boyd Road, N.B.

Dear Editor,—My brother goes to school with me. I live on a farm two miles and a half from school. I have five sisters and one brother. My youngest sister's name is Myrtle, and my brother's name is Guy. My papa takes the 'Witness,' and I enjoy reading the Children's Corner and the Boys' Page. CLARA McL. (aged 12.)

Welsford, N.B., March 14, 1900.

Dear Editor,—I received the Berry Spoon and can't see how you can give such good premiums for so little. I had to walk several miles to get it, but that is not much for a boy of 11 years. There has been skating or coasting nearly all winter. I have been given skates for a Xmas present for two years. I got twenty-five Xmas presents this year. R. E. McCULLY.