

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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## THE DANGEROUS FOUNTAIN.

BY ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

ONCE upon a time, as a man was travelling along a dusty highway, he came to a bright fountain. "Good," said he, "I'll take a drink."

"No," said a voice at his side; "it is not good, it is very bad, do not touch it!"

The speaker was a plain countryman, with a kind, honest face. "What's wrong with the fountain?" asked the traveller; it looks good enough."

"It is a deadly poison," answered the countryman. "It does not kill at once, more's the pity; but it destroys you by degrees; soul first, and then the body."

"But why do you allow such a nuisance in your country?" asked the first, incredulously. "Alas!" replied the other, "there are more people bewitched by it than those who fear it."

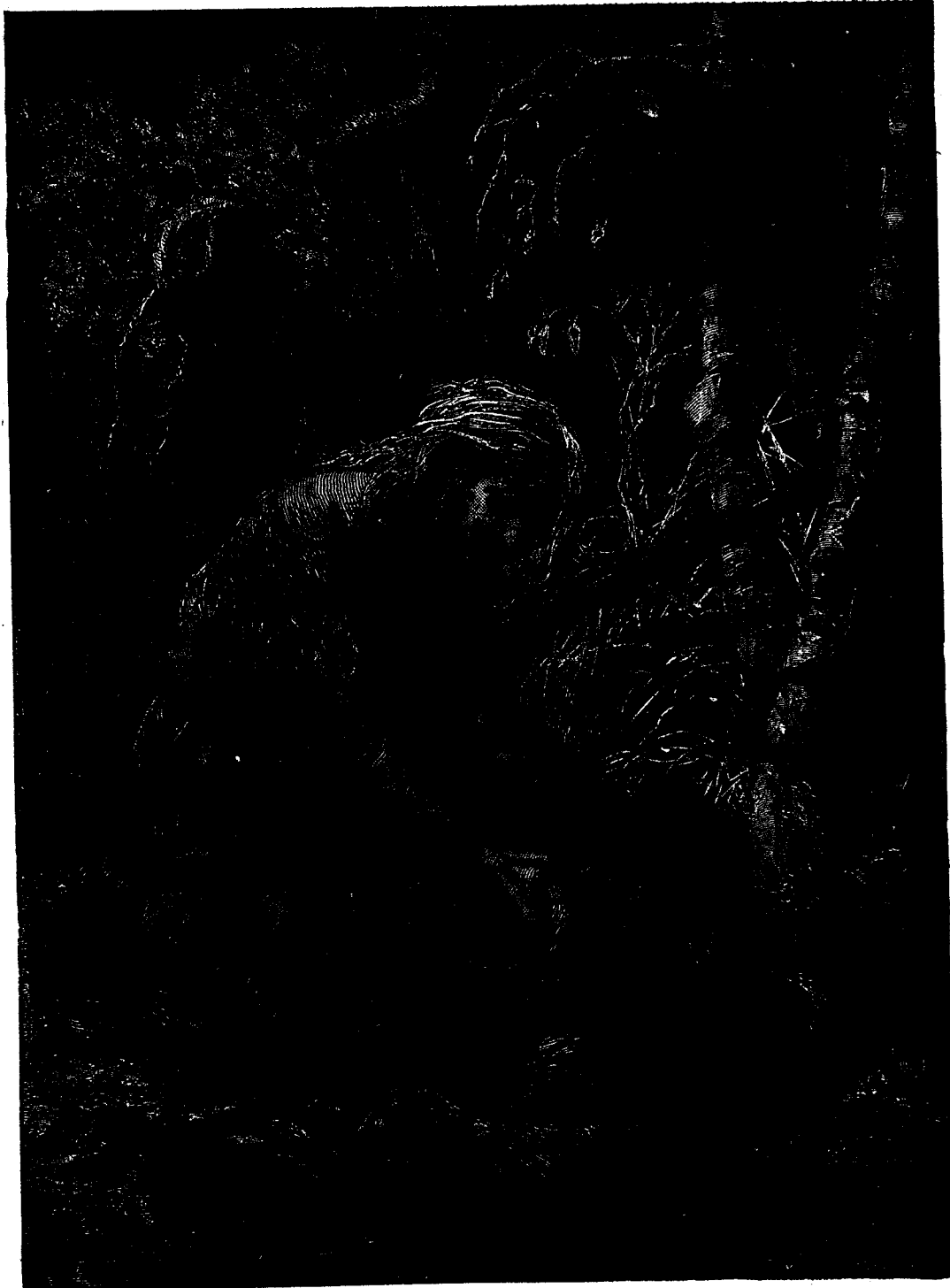
"Tut tut," said the traveller, "I don't believe your bugaboo story; I shall try for myself, since you say it does not kill at once."

"Stop!" cried the countryman, as the stranger put his lips to the fountain. "Let me give you one more warning; even the first drink, if you take enough to satisfy thirst, will change you for a time into a beast."

The traveller laughed aloud. "Now I know you are lying," he said. "Off with you," and he stooped and drank.

But, sure enough, he found himself immediately changed into a pig, and obliged to root and grunt and wallow, after the manner of that beast. The effect of his draught soon passed away, and then he felt inclined to laugh at his experience, and even made a joke of it among his friends.

Some of them laughed with him; but the wiser



THE INDIAN SCOUT AND HIS DYING HOUND.

From "Aims and Objects of the Toronto Humane Society."

ones shook their heads and advised him not to repeat his experiment.

Nor did he think of doing so, but his work now took him past the fountain every day, and every time he passed it, he felt more and more inclined to stop.

"Pshaw!" he said to himself, "it does not hurt a man to find out occasionally how a pig feels;"

and he stopped and drank, not once, but twice, and three times, and by and by every day, each time losing his own nature for that of a pig.

And the character of the beast seemed to grow fiercer as time went on; for, while he was a pig, the man would ravage gardens and do much damage, so that his neighbours began to hate and fear him.

His friends besought him to stay away from the fountain. Alas! now he could not; a raging thirst which nothing could allay drove him to the cursed waters, to drink more and more deeply.

And, lo! instead of a pig, he was presently turned into a wild boar, a terror to all. One fatal day, while he had on the nature of the fierce beast, he turned upon his wife and children and slew them, and afterwards died at the gallows, amidst howls of execration, as a murderer!

What does my dark little story mean? It means to show you in a glass the picture of one who tampers with strong drink, his folly, his oncoming helplessness, and the wretched end threatening him, that you, dear, clean, pure young folks may turn with horror from the first drink.—*Selected.*

ALCOHOL acts injuriously upon the nerve tissues in three different ways: First, through its chemical action

upon the blood; second, by disordering the liver's functions, and causing the bile to accumulate in the circulation, and thereby poison the brain and nerves; and third, by its accelerating the heart's action, and thus sending an increased supply of blood to the brain, every increase in an organ's blood-supply being associated with a corresponding increase in the functional activity of the organ.