

His mother did not know what he meant by the ship story till the two found time to talk over the matter that evening.—*Meade Middleton. in S. S. Times.*

SWORN OFF.

"No, I won't drink with you to-day, boys," said a drummer to several companions, as they settled down in the smoking car, and passed the bottle. "The fact is, I have quit drinking—I've sworn off." He was greeted with shouts of laughter by the jolly crowd around him; they put the bottle in under his nose and indulged in many jokes at his expense, but he refused to drink, and was rather serious about it. "What's the matter with you, old boy?" sang out one. "If you've quit drinking, something's up; tell us what it is?" "Well, boys, I will, though I know you'll laugh at me, but I'll tell you all the same. I have been a drinking man all my life, ever since I was married, as you all know. I love whiskey—it's as sweet in my mouth as sugar—and God only knows how I will quit it. For seven years not a day has passed over my head that I didn't have at least one drink. But I am done. Yesterday I was in Chicago. Down on South Clark street a customer of mine keeps a pawn shop in connection with his other business. I called on him, and while I was there a young man of not more than twenty-five, wearing threadbare clothes, and looking as hard as if he hadn't seen a sober day for a month, came in with a little package in his hand. Tremblingly he unwrapped it, and handed the article to the pawnbroker, saying, 'Give me ten cents.' And, boys, what do you suppose it was? A pair of baby shoes, little things, with the buttons only a trifle soiled, as if they had been worn only once or twice. 'Where did you get these?' asked the pawnbroker. 'Got 'em at home,' replied the man, who had an intelligent face and the manner of a gentleman, despite his sad condition. 'My—my wife bought them for our baby. Give me ten cents for 'em—I want a drink.' 'You had better take the shoes back to your wife; the baby will need them,' said the pawnbroker. 'No, s-she won't, because—because she's dead. She's lying at home now—died last night.' As he said this the poor fellow broke down, bowed his head on the showcase and cried like a child." "Boys," said the drummer, "you can laugh if you please but I have a baby of my own at home, and I'll swear I'll never drink another drop." Then he got up and went into another car. His companions glanced at each other in silence; no one laughed; the bottle disappeared, and soon each was sitting in a seat by himself reading a newspaper.—*Steuben Signal.*

FIRMNESS.

The habit of being firm should be early cultivated. It is indispensable to one's happiness, honor and success in life. Many of our young men and women lack this, and are led astray and ruined. If they have the moral courage to say "No," they have not the firmness to adhere to it. Wanting this, many a young man has been led into habits of drunkenness and profligacy, into wicked ways, to the commission of crimes, ending life in disgrace and infamy, and many a young woman, too, has been led into habits of vice and profligacy to follow a wicked and shameful life, culminating in a sad and disgraceful end. Firmness should, therefore, under all circumstances, be one of the earliest and most thoroughly learned lessons of life. Its value is clearly seen, and its importance strikingly manifested, in several incidents in the life of the late United States Senator, Henry Wilson.

"Henry Wilson," says *The Religious Intelligencer*, "was a firm and self-controlled as well as a self-made man. He left his native New Hampshire home early in life, and changed his name in order to get from under the baleful shadow of intemperance. He began on the lowest round of the social ladder, and climbed up, rung by rung, until he became a political power in the nation.

"The first step he took, in the ascent, placed him on the pledge never to drink intoxicating liquors. The second step he took made him an industrious laborer, the third, a diligent reader.

"He was sent to Washington to carry a petition against the admission of Texas into the Union. John Quincy Adams asked him to a dinner party, where he met some of the great men of the nation. He was asked to drink wine. The temptation to lay aside his temperance principles for a moment, in order not to seem singular, was a strong one. But he resisted it, and declined the glass of wine. Mr. Adams commended him for his adherence to his convictions.

"After Mr. Wilson was elected to the United States Senate, he gave his friends a dinner at a noted Boston Hotel. The table was set with not a glass on it.

"'Where are the wine glasses?' asked several, loud enough to remind their host that some of his guests did not like sitting down to a wineless supper.

"'Gentlemen,' said Mr. Wilson, rising, and speaking with a great deal of feeling, 'you know my friendship for you and my obligations to you. Great as they are, they are not great enough to make me forget the rock from whence I was hewn and the pit from whence I was dug. Some of you know how the curse of intemperance overshadowed my youth. That I might escape, I fled from my early surroundings, and changed my name.

For what I am, I am indebted, under God, to my temperance vow, and to my adherence to it. Call for what you want to eat, and if this hotel can provide it, shall be forthcoming. But wines and liquors cannot come to this table with my consent, because I will not spread, in the path of another the snare from which I escaped."

"Three rousing cheers showed the brave Senator that honest men admire the man, who has the moral courage, publicly and frankly to express his own sincere convictions, and the firmness to adhere to them.

Our Gasket.

JEWELS.

Good manners are the small coin of virtue

The smelts in the market are said to be in the present tense.

"What is laughter?" asks a scientist. It is the sound that you hear when your hat blows off.

He surely is most in want of another's patience who has none of his own.

True merit like a river, the deeper it is, the less noise it makes.

There is no power of genius that can do the work of toil.

Who is wise? he that learns from every one. Who is powerful? he that governs his passions. Who is rich? he that is content.

Religion is not a thing of noise and spasm, but of silent self-sacrifice and quiet growth.

A golden rule for a young lady is, to converse always with your female friends as if a gentleman were of the party, and with young men as if your female companions were present.—[Sprague.

Good-breeding is the art of showing men, by external signs, the internal regard we have for them. It arises from good sense, improved by conversing with good company.

The mind of the scholar, if you would have it large and liberal, should come in contact with other minds. It is better that his armour should be somewhat bruised by rude encounters even, than hanging forever rusting on the wall.—[Longfellow.

BITS OF TINSEL.

Why is a retired carpenter like a lecturer?—Because he is an explainer.

A little boy of three years, whose mother played the organ in church, and who was obliged to be left to the care of others, was asked one Sunday morning what his kitten was crying so piteously for. "I don't know," said he, "but s'pect the old cat has gone to church."

At an hotel recently a man and a woman of Milesian extraction took seats at the dinner-table. Directly afterwards a young couple seated themselves opposite, and the young man took a stalk of celery from the glass in the centre of the table and commenced eating it. The Irishwoman opposite looked at him a moment with an air of disgust, and then nudged her husband and said, in a stage-whisper, "Phelim dear, d'ye mind the blackguard eating the bokay?"

Sandy was a country gardener, and like many other country lads, he had a sweetheart. One night Sandy told her that he "likit" her "awfu' weel." She simply responded, "Ditto." Sandy was not very sure what that meant, but thought he would ask his father; so next day, while at work, he said, "Father, can ye tell me what 'ditto' is?" "Ou, ay, Sandy!" replied his father. "Dae ye see that cabbage?" "Yes." "And dae ye see that ither ane, that it's jist the same?" "Yes." "Weel, that's ditto." "Gracious goodness!" exclaimed Sandy. "Did she ca' me a cabbage?"

"And you say that you are innocent of the charge of stealing a rooster from Mr. Jones?" asked an Arkansas judge of a meek-looking prisoner. "Yes, sir, I am innocent—as innocent as a child." "You are confident that you did not steal the rooster from Mr. Jones?" "Yes, sir; and I can prove it." "How can you prove it?" "I can prove that I didn't steal Mr. Jones's rooster, judge, because I stole two hens from Mr. Graston the same night; and Jones lives five miles from Graston's." "The proof is conclusive," said the judge. "Discharge the prisoner."

We have been eating bread and butter for generations, and we wake one morning to be solemnly informed by a medical wiscacre that we have been eating it the wrong way all the time, the sense of taste is keener on the tongue than on the palate, and therefore to get the fullest flavour of the butter we should turn the slice upside down. Adapting this plan much less butter is needed, and the father of a large family may save a small fortune by buttering his children's bread on the other side, or making them stand on their heads while eating.