

## THE BOTTLE OF GIN.

BY ELIZABETH A. VOSE.

ONCE a bottle of gin,  
In a smart, flashy inn,  
Looked craftily out on the street;  
Till a boy happened by—  
(Liked "the spider and fly"  
Is the tale I'm about to repeat.)

Said the bottle of gin,  
"Come in, come in,  
Young sir, and be friendly with me."  
And the youth came awhile,  
At the bottle's bland smile,  
"I'll stop but a moment," thought he.

Then the bottle spoke up,  
"Take a sup, take a sup,  
Young sir, and make merry with me."  
And the boy took a drink,  
(Oh, children, just think!  
It was dreadful as dreadful could be.)

Oried the bottle of gin,  
With a bad, mocking grin—  
"Tut! tut! my young sir, oh, I say!  
Your nose is too red,  
And too light is your head,  
You are really in quite a bad way!"

When the bottle of gin  
Looked as ugly as sin,  
And laughed in a demon-like glee;  
For he well knew he had  
Enchained the poor lad,  
Till a slave of the bottle was he.

## THE SUFFERINGS OF CHILDHOOD.

THE sufferings of a bashful boy! Can any torture chamber be more dreadful than the juvenile party, the drawing-room filled with critical elders, the necessary parade of the Christmas dinner, to a shy boy? I have sometimes taken the hand of such a one and found it cold and clammy; desperate was the struggle of that young soul, afraid of he knew not what, caught by the machinery of society, which mangled him at every point, crushed every nerve, and filled him with faintness and fear. How happy he might have been with that brood of young puppies in the barn, or the soft rabbits in their nest of hay! How grand he was, paddling his poor leaky boat down the rapids, jumping into the river and dragging it with his splendid strength over the rocks! Nature and he were friends; he was not afraid of her; she recognized her child, and greeted him with smiles. The young animals loved him, and his dog looked up into his fair blue eyes, and recognized his king. But this creature must be tamed; he must be brought into prim parlours, and dine with propriety; he must dress himself in garments which scratch, and pull, and hurt him; boots must be put on his feet which pinch; he must be clean—terrible injustice to a faun who loves to roll down hill, to grub for roots, to follow young squirrels to their lair, and to polish old girths rather than his manners!

And then the sensitive boy, who has a finer grain than the majority of his fellows, suddenly thrown into the pandemonium of a public school! Nails driven into the flesh could not inflict such pain as such a one suffers, and the scars remain. One gentleman told me, in mature life, that the loss of a toy stolen from him in childhood still rankled. How much of the infirmity of human character may be traced to the anger, the sense of wounded feeling, engendered by a wrong done in childhood when one is helpless to avenge.

All this may be called the necessary hardening process, but I do not believe in it. We have learned how to temper iron and steel, but we have not learned how to treat children. Could it be made a money-making process, like the Bessemer, I believe one could learn how to temper the human character. Our instincts of intense love for our children are not enough, we should study it as a science. The human race is very busy; it has to take care of itself, and to feed its young; it must conquer the earth—perhaps it has not time to study Jim and Jack and Charley, and Mary and Emily and Jane, as problems. But, if it had, would it not perhaps pay? There would be fewer criminals.

Many observers recommend a wise neglect—not too much inquiry, but a judicious surrounding of the best influences; and then—let your young plant grow up. Yes; but it should be a very wise neglect—it should be a neglect which is always on the watch lest some insidious parasite, some unnoticed but strong bias of character, take possession of the child, and mould or ruin him. Of the ten boys running up yonder hill, five will be failures, two will be moderate successes, two will do better, one will be great, good and distinguished. If such are the terrible statistics—and I am told that they are so—who is to blame? Certainly the parent, or guardian, or circumstance—and what is circumstance?

## WHAT OUR GOOD BOYS MUST LEARN.

- To cultivate a cheerful temper.
- To choose their friends among good boys.
- To learn to sew on their own buttons
- Not to tease boys or girls smaller than themselves.
- To take pride in being a little gentleman at home.
- To be polite and helpful to their own sisters, as they are to other boys' sisters.
- To treat their mother as politely as if she were a strange lady, who did not spend her life in their service.
- To feel a noble pride in making their mothers and sisters their best friends.
- When their play is over for the day, to wash faces and hands, brush the hair, and spend the evening in the house.
- If they do anything wrong, to take their mothers into their confidence, and above all never to lie about anything they have done.
- Not to take the easiest chair in the room, and put it directly in front of the fire, and

to forget to offer it to their mother when she comes in to sit down.

Not to grumble, or refuse, when asked to do some errand that must be done, and which otherwise will take the time of some one who has more to do than themselves.

To make up their minds not to learn to smoke, to chew, to drink, remembering that these things cannot be unlearned, and that they are terrible drawbacks to good men, and necessities to bad ones.

## THE STORY KITTY MADE UP.

Lou was naughty that day, and Kitty said, "Now let's read a nice story."

The sisters liked to take a picture book and pretend to read stories from the pictures.

"You read this time," said Lou.

"All right," said Kitty.

So she turned the leaves until she came to a picture of a little girl with a big pout on her pretty lips, and this is the story she read:

"Once a good fairy said to her queen, 'Please send me where I can do a kind deed.' And the queen said, 'Go to that beautiful house over there, and you will find some work to do.' Now, the good fairy did not know that a bad spirit named 'Ill Temper' had been there all the morning, and had left a pout on the little girl's lips. What do you guess the good fairy did? Why, she just went and kissed that pout, and it all went away, quick."

"Oh, oh!" cried Lou; "you're the good fairy, for you kissed me, and then I felt good."

## NOT OUR OWN.

A LITTLE boy was debating what to do with some money his uncle had given him. He wanted to buy candy with it, but felt that he ought to give a part of it for the missionary society of which he was a member. At last he said, "I guess it is mine, and I can do as I please with it." "No," said his brother, "you cannot do as you please, for you are not your own; I heard our minister say that we were all bought with the blood of Christ. If he has bought us, we are his, and the missionaries are his, and we must please him, not ourselves."

## SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS

FEBRUARY 4.

LESSON TOPIC—Beginning of the Hebrew Nation.—Gen. 12. 1-9.

MEMORY VERSES, Gen. 12. 1-3.

GOLDEN TEXT—I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.—Gen. 12. 2.

FEBRUARY 11

LESSON TOPIC—God's Covenant with Abram.—Gen. 17. 1-3.

MEMORY VERSES, Gen. 17. 7, 8.

GOLDEN TEXT—He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness.—Gen. 15. 6.