

be kept in order, and prove the salvation of the country, but as yet there seems no hope of the Chinese Government undertaking so radical an improvement.

In the present instance it appears that the probability of danger has for some time been foreseen, for not only has the enormous deposit of silt at the mouth of the river gradually changed and considerably raised the bed of its estuary on the Gulf of Pe-chi-li, but the same deposit has been so serious along its course that some months before the disaster the Chinese officials in charge suggested that it might be well to endeavor to relieve the pressure by cutting the embankment near Kaifung-fu (i.e., about forty miles above the spot where the breach has occurred), and to guide the escaping waters back to the channel which they forsook thirty years ago.

Well may all concerned wish that this happy suggestion had been carried out. The Government now seems to ignore that it was ever made, for a very characteristic feature in this matter is the manner in which such a calamity is visited on the unfortunate officials in whose district it has occurred. Though such an unprecedented flood would probably have swept away the mightiest embankment that human skill ever constructed, all the chief men in the inundated part of the province have been degraded. Some have been deprived of the much-valued button denoting honor, which is worn on the cap, and a considerable number, including the sub-prefect, the mayor, the assistant department magistrate, and others, are condemned to be exposed in the cangue along the banks of the river. The cangue, or wooden collar, is a large, heavy, square of wood, opening so as to allow the prisoner's neck to enter, when it is again closed. From the time it is put on it is not removed till the term of sentence has expired—perhaps three months—during which time the luckless prisoner cannot lie down in any attitude of comfort and cannot touch his own head with his hand, so he is dependent on the mercy of others to feed him. Altogether, it can scarcely be desirable to occupy a position of high responsibility in a Chinese district watered by such a stream as the Great Yellow river!

* The Chinese map which we give on an adjacent page bears the title "The Disastrous Flood in the Province of Honan."

The branch of river flowing northwards was its bed previous to the flood, now left dry. That flowing eastward was its ancient bed.

The point of overflow is just above the bend to the left, and the inundation thus floods the Province of Honan lying south and south-east of that point.

The name of the large walled city in the centre is Kaifung; the name of the next in size on the left is Ching-chou. To this latter city in the map is appended the sentence, "All the inhabitants were destroyed by the flood."

The tablet of Chinese characters in the river itself states that great numbers of the corpses of the dead are floating down the river.

The tablet in the midst of the flood-waters states that a father and son having been floated down ten li (three li to a mile), were rescued from the flood [as depicted].

The upper tablet on the right gives an account of a contribution of 100,000 taels from the Empress for the repairs, also 300,000 subsequently (4 taels equal to £1 sterling).

The middle tablet gives the contributions from Kiang-su—from the literati; the lower tablet states the amounts from Che-Kiang.

THE BUG IN THE BOTTLE.

REV. EDWARD A. RAND.

"You see dat bug, honey?"

It was old Caesar, the colored gardener, who made this remark to young Pompey. Before the big, wondering eyes of the boy, Caesar held up a stout bottle. At the bottom of this bottle was a bug.

"You see dat bug?" asked Caesar again. Pompey nodded an assent.

"Dat am a bug a-tryin' fur to climb dat bottle an' he kent!"

That was plain. Now and then the bug would make a frantic dash at the walls of his glass prison, and try to scale them, but in vain.

"Dat's de way ob de ole' drunkard. I don't say, honey, a man ken nebber stop a-drinkin', fur some do; but it am dat heap hard dat you mought say it were like dat bug a-tryin' to git out dat bottle."

"Well, what of it?" said Pompey's rolling, shining eyes, though his tongue was silent. What interest had he in this object-lesson?

Caesar anticipated this inquiry. "De lesson am dis," declared Caesar solemnly; "Nebber cotch yerself a-goin' into de bottle. Don't take the fus' taste. If yo gits de lub and de hanker fur it ye may

find yerself at de bottom ob de bottle. Go an' jine de pledge!"

Pompey went home thinking. He was only a boy, perhaps twelve; but he had some of a man's serious thoughts on the subject of temperance. Special meetings had aroused a special interest in Pompey's neighborhood. Alexander, the blacksmith; Abe Lincoln, the peddler; George Washington, the oysterman; Thoman Jefferson, the whitewasher, had all, "jined," or signed the pledge. Many others had taken this stand, and the interest was extending to the children. These were asked to "jine."

Some of the adults objected. They asked, "What do children know about intemperance?" Others thought as did Caesar, who said, "Don't let 'em git into de obil in the fus' place." To illustrate the difficulties that sometimes attend reform, he devised the object-lesson of the bug and the bottle, and gave it wherever he could find an audience even of one boy.

Pompey went home to tell his old grandmother, with whom he lived, something about Caesar's impressive lecture. Granny had a reputation as a moderate drinker who threatened to become an immoderate one.

"Come, Granny," said Pompey; "you and me had better jine de pledge."

"A heap ob nonsense, honey!"

"You ought an' go fur to see Caesar."

"What he got, chile?"

"Bug an' bottle."

Then he faithfully reported Caesar's short but effective lecture. Granny pretended to laugh at it.

"What fur he call that bug, Pompey?"

"Some kind ob a beetle."

"Dat bug, honey,—I'll tell ye his name; it am humbug. Ha ha!"

Granny laughed till the tears rolled down her fat cheeks. However, Caesar's illustrated lecture, as reported by Pompey, did make an impression upon her. She would not confess it, but only said, "When ye see yer granny at de bottom ob de bottle, den I'll jine the pledge."

She would say nothing more, but, cutting him a big slice of watermelon and a small slice of bread, told Pompey to eat his supper. They were alone in their cabin, and after supper naturally were drowsy; and amid the shadows Pompey saw a startling vision looming up before him. It was a big bottle,—much bigger than the kind Granny liked to keep in the cupboard, but of the same shape. It had the same kind of a label, "Cider."

"Nuffin but apple-jews in dat, Pompey,"

Granny would sometimes say; but it had such potency that Pompey would notice that, after a draught of "nuffin but," the old lady was sometimes quite excited. Then, as the days went on, it would take a bigger draught from the bottle of "nuffin but" to satisfy her, which Pompey took as a damaging sign. In his vision the evening of our story, he noticed that this immense bottle was lying on its side, and soon Granny appeared near its mouth.

"She's goin' in?" thought Pompey.

Granny was a big woman, but somehow, to his surprise, she slipped into the bottle,—for alcohol, as a rule, is a bigger thing than the human will,—and before Pompey could scream, "Granny, don't!" she was not only in, but the bottle suddenly began to tip up, and poor Granny was sliding down toward the bottom! In a moment she would be there!

He rushed up to the enemy, seized it by its neck, and tugged away at it, trying to keep it down and liberate his relative, and shouting, "Granny, don't! Ye'll go to de bottom, de bottom! Jine the pledge! Granny!"

He shouted so loud and tugged so hard, that he woke himself up. There was Granny's big form before him, and he was furiously gripping it.

"Chile!" she shouted, also coming out of the depths of an after-supper nap, "what yer hell'rin' fur 'an a-grippin' me?"

"You out de bottle, Granny?"

"Out de bottle, honey? I nebber ben in a bottle. Yer thinkin' bout dat bug ob dat ole Caesar,—mis'able bein, frightenin' de childer."

"I—I—saw yo in a bottle, an' I don't b'lieb yer could git out, Granny. Ye were boun' fur de bottom."

Granny had a superstitious regard for dreams. She now gave the matter a serious significance.

"Yer did, Pompey? Don't yer tell a lie!"

"Twas you, Granny!"

"Yer own ole Granny?"

"Sure!"

"Uph!" groaned Granny.

"Will ye jine de pledge, Granny, wid me? Sez yer would of I saw yer at de bottom ob a bottle, and yer was boun' fer it."

Granny thought it over. Then she rose, gave Pompey's hand a powerful grip, and together they went out into the night.

There was a beautiful moon looking out of a window in the soft, white clouds, and by its light they quickly journeyed to Caesar's cabin.

"Come in, come in! Right smart glad ter see ye!" was the old man's welcome.

"Want fur to jine the pledge?" explained Pompey. "Me an' Granny."

On Caesar's pine table, lighted by one tall candle that his cabin afforded, was a much-thumbed pledge, and beside it was the bottle and bug.

"Look at dat bug, an' sign!" exhorted Caesar.

Granny recalled Pompey's dream, shuddered and signed. She was not a "powerful" pen-woman, and when she had finished, she said her name looked "suthin'" like a turkey buzzard tryin' to git ober a rail fence.

"It's Granny," said Pompey, encouragingly. "She's gwine fur to stick, an' here's me!"

"Pompey Jones" was the signature, in good, strong, clear print.

"Granny!" he whispered, pointing at the creature in the bottle, "dat a humbug?"

She shook her head. "Lot ob troof in dat!"

The two callers went away, but Caesar quickly summoned them back.

"Jes' a word," he said. "Don't forgit to say a prayer on top ob dat pledge. Dat what gibs de sure vict'ry."

And truth, a blessed truth, was in his thought also.—*Sunday-school Times.*

KNOWLEDGE is but folly unless it be guided by grace, and directed by duty.—*Herbert.*

Question Corner.—No. 11.

PRIZE BIBLE QUESTIONS.

37. In early Bible times a place was called by a name signifying "The Lord will provide." What was the name; who gave it this name, and for what was the place chiefly noted centuries afterwards?

38. Who was Paul's companion on his second missionary journey and what places did he visit? Name the places in order.

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