

streams roll, and in their rolling bid the traveller drink and be glad—and that anon his pulpit is an Etna, whose sides shake with surging billows of fire, and whence issue devouring flames; he finds that his minister can not only sing the sweet soft songs of love and hope, but can command a sarcasm before which vice grows pale and staggers with amazement, that he has carried a sword which has cloven many a vaunting foe. In course of time the admirer cannot bear this. The minister is dealing too faithfully with his conscience. The man knows that he has broken both the tables of the law, and now that he is being smitten with the avenging stones, he decries the minister who was once his idol, and his fickle love is turned into another channel. Long ago a drum-headed lad said to me, "Your sermons make my head ache;" but he has never looked at me with a smile since I asked him whether that was the blame of my sermons or of his own head. Or take the case of one who has been distinguished for much service in the cause of God, and see how the fires pale. He becomes prosperous in business. His oblations on the altar of mammon are costlier than ever. He toils in the service of self until his energies are nearly exhausted, and then his class in the school is neglected; the grass grows on his tract district; his nature has become so perverted that he almost longs for an occasion of offence, that he may retire from the duties of the religious life. Could you have heard him in the hour of his new-born joy, when he first placed his foot in God's kingdom, you could not have thought that ever he had been reduced to so low a moral temperature. What holy vows escaped him! How rich he was in promise! He was like a fruit tree in the sunny spring-time, perfectly white with ten thousand blossoms, and passers-by prophesied that every branch would be laden with luscious fruit. But look at him now; turn the leaves over, and with eager eyes search for fruit, and say is the promise of spring redeemed in autumn? Innumerable influences are continually in operation, which would cool the ardour of our first enthusiasm for Christ. Satan plies us with a thousand treacherous arts; the world allures us with a thousand transitory charms; our inborn depravity reveals itself in a thousand varying manifestations; pride and selfishness, ambition and luxury, appeal to us in a thousand voices, and beckon us with a thousand hands. Let men of rich, deep, manifold experience tell me how difficult it is to nourish and maintain our pristine love for Jesus, and how essential it is to fight our battles on our knees if we would keep our treasured love safe from the grasp of the arch-plunderer of the universe.—*Joseph Parker, D.D.*,

### THE WOODEN END OF THE PLANK.

Men are not made great so often by the advantages they have, as by their improving them. A college cannot make a scholar unless the young man studies. In a certain sense, then, every man is self-made. One of our distinguished generals was once a common workman in a factory. He has since held some of the highest offices in the gift of the people, and has won imperishable honours in the army.

He tells us that one morning, as the factory was lighted up before light in the early dawn, and just as objects could be seen out of the door, he was looking out of the window, and saw an object moving along slowly on the ice that covered the river. While watching it, suddenly the ice broke and the dark object went down. In an instant he thought it must be a man. So calling a companion, he ran down stairs and out towards the object. He had the forethought to snatch up a plank, which he carried on his shoulder. When they had reached the place, they found it was a coloured man, who had broken through the ice and was struggling for his life.

They thrust out the plank. The poor fellow seized it with both hands.

"Now hold on, Tim, and we'll pull you out."

So they pulled and got him almost out, when off he slipped and went down again! On his coming up they pushed the end of the plank to him again, and cried,

"Now, Tim, hold on with all your might."