

Temperance

A Gift of God.

God gave a gift to Earth—a child,
Weak, innocent, and undefiled,
Opened its ignorant eyes and smiled.

It lay so helpless, so forlorn,
Earth took it coldly, and in scorn,
Cursing the day when it was born.

She gave it first a tarnished name;
For heritage, a tainted fame;
Then cradled it in want and shame.

All influence of Good or Right,
All ray of God's most holy light,
She curtailed closely from its sight.

Then turned her heart, her eyes away,
Ready to look again the day
Its little feet began to stray.

In dens of guilt the baby played,
Where sin, and sin alone, was made
The law that all around obeyed.

With ready and obedient care,
He learnt the tasks they taught him there:
Black sin for lesson—oaths for prayer.

Then Earth arose, and in her might,
To vindicate her injured right,
Thrust him in deeper depths of night—

Branding him with a deeper brand
Of shame he could not understand,
The felon outcast of the land.

God gave a gift to Earth—a child,
Weak, innocent, and undefiled,
Opened its ignorant eyes and smiled.

And Earth received the gift, and cried
Her joy and triumph far and wide,
Till echo answered to her pride.

She blest the hour when first he came
To take the crown of pride and fame,
Wreathed through long ages for his name.

Then bent her utmost art and skill
To train the supple mind and will,
And guard it from a breath of ill.

She shed in rainbow hues of light
A halo round the Good and Right,
To tempt and charm the baby's sight.

And then the World arose and said—
'Let added honors now be shed
On such a noble heart and head!'

O World! Both gifts were pure and bright,
Holy and sacred in God's sight—
'God will judge them and thee aright!'
—A. A. Proctor.

A Doomed Army.

'Tramp, tramp, tramp! the boys are marching.' How many of them? Sixty full regiments, every man of which will, before twelve months shall have completed their course, lie down in the grave of a drunkard! Every year during the past decade has witnessed the same sacrifice; and sixty regiments stand behind this army, ready to take its place. It is to be recruited from our children, and our children's children.

'Tramp, tramp, tramp!' the sounds come to us in the echoes of the footsteps of the army just expired; tramp, tramp! the earth shakes with the thread of the host now passing; tramp, tramp, tramp! comes to us from the camp of the recruits. A great tide of life flows resistlessly to its death.

What are they fighting for? The privilege of pleasing an appetite, of conforming to a social usage, of filling sixty thousand homes

with shame and sorrow, of loading the public with the burden of pauperism, of crowding our prison houses with felons, of detracting from the productive industries of the country, of ruining fortunes and breaking hopes, of breeding disease and wretchedness, of destroying both body and soul in hell before their time.

Meantime the tramp, tramp, tramp sounds on—the tramp of sixty thousand yearly victims. Some are besotted and stupid, some are wild with hilarity, and dance along the dusty way, some reel along in pitiful weakness, some wreak their mad and murderous impulses on one another, or on the helpless women and children whose destinies are united to theirs, some stop in wayside debaucheries and infamies for a moment, some go bound in chains from which they seek in vain to wrench their bleeding wrists, and all are poisoned in body and soul, and all are doomed to death.

Wherever they move, crime, poverty, shame, wretchedness and despair hover in awful shadows. There is no bright side to the picture. We forget—there is just one. The men who make this army get rich. Their children are robed in purple and fine linen, and live upon dainties. Some of them are regarded as respectable members of society, and they hold conventions to protect their interests! Still the tramp, tramp, tramp goes on, and before this article can see the light, five thousand more of our poisoned army will have hidden their shame and disgrace in the grave.—Scribner.

Telling Fortunes.

I'll tell you two fortunes, my little lad,
For you to accept or refuse—
The one of them good, and the other one bad;
Now hear them and say which you choose.

I see, by my gift, within reach of your hand,
A fortune right fair to behold,
A house and a hundred good acres of land,
With harvest fields yellow as gold.

I see a great orchard, with boughs hanging down.

With apples of russet and red;
I see droves of cattle, some white and some brown;
But all of them sleek and well fed.

I see doves and swallows about the barn-doors,

See the fanning-mill whirling so fast,
See men that are threshing the wheat on the floors,
And now the bright picture is past.

And I see rising dismally up in the place
Of the beautiful house and the land,
A man with a fire-red nose on his face,
And a little brown jug in his hand.

Oh! if you beheld him, my lad, you would wish
That he were less wretched to see;
For his boot-toes, they gape like the mouth
of a fish,
And his trousers are out at the knee.

In walking he staggers now this way, now that,
And his eyes, they stand out like a bug's;
And he wears an old coat and a battered-in hat,
And I think that the fault is the jug's.

Now which will you choose—to be thrifty and snug,
And to be right side up with your dish;
Or to go with your eyes like the eyes of a bug,
And your shoes like the mouth of a fish?
—Selected.

When men in all stations of life so strongly condemn cigarette smoking and so repeatedly warn young men and boys against it, the question comes to me again and again. Why will boys not take warning? Why will they smoke cigarettes when they know they are so injurious and harmful?—'Youth's Temperance Banner.'

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