

### The Sabbath Bells.

THE old man sits in his easy chair,  
And his ear has caught the ringing  
Of many a church bell far and near,  
Their own sweet music singing  
And his head sinks low on his aged breast,  
While his thoughts far back are reaching  
To the Sabbath morn of his boyish days,  
And a mother's sacred teaching.

A few years later, and lo, the bells  
A merrier strain were pealing,  
And heavenward bore the marriage vow  
Which his manhood's joy was sealing.  
But the old man's eyes were dimming now,  
As memory holds before him  
The sad, sad picture of later years,  
When the tide of grief rolled o'er him.

When the bells were tolling for loved ones gone,  
For the wife, for the sons and daughters,  
Who, one by one, from his home went out,  
And down into death's dark waters.  
But the aged heart has still one joy  
Which his old life daily blesses,  
And his eyes grow bright and his pulses warm  
'Neath a grandchild's sweet caresses.

But the old man wakes from his reverie,  
And his dear old face is smiling,  
While the child with the serious eyes reads on,  
The Sabbath hours beguiling.  
Ah, the bells once more will ring for him,  
When the heavenly hand shall sever  
The cord of life, and his freed soul flies  
To dwell with his own forever.

### Meditation.

THIS young lady seems lost in meditation as she looks from the battlements of some ancient castle on the gloried valley of the Rhine. She is thinking perhaps of the many strange historic scenes enacted on its banks.

Yes, there it flows, forever, broad and still,  
As when the vanguard of the Roman legions  
First saw it from the top of yonder hill!  
How beautiful it is! Fresh fields of wheat,  
Vineyard, and town, and tower with fluttering flag,  
The consecrated chapel on the crag,  
And the white hamlet gathered round its base,  
Like Mary sitting at her Saviour's feet  
And looking up at his loved face!

### "Is He A Good Man?"

BY MRS. E. H. BRADLEY.

WHO? Why the popular minister who smokes, and by so doing fosters disobedience to parents, nullifies scientific lessons which teach that nicotine is a nerve paralyzer, as alcohol is a brain poisoner, and takes sides with the world in a habit which only smoke-lovers heartily defend. We may ask, or let a country lad answer for one of the most popular smoking ministers.

"Have you seen this portrait, and the article telling how Mr. — became one of us?" asked a temperance worker one Sunday of the preacher for the day who was, like herself, a guest at a certain hospitable farm-house. "Yes," was the reply, "I have." No pleasure was evinced and the lady wondered at the short response, as she knew that the said minister was well-known in that locality and there, as everywhere, a great favourite. To get at the reason for the cool reply, she said, "We all felt particularly grateful to hear of his adopting our safe principles, and putting on our 'bit of blue.' His popularity as a preacher will be a double blessing, with his personal influence against the drink traffic."

"I wish you could persuade him to abstain from cigars," was the reply.

"Do you mean to say he smokes?" the lady asked.

"Yes, indeed, he smokes costly cigars, and his extravagance is only a part of his bad example.

There is a broken-hearted widow on our circuit, grieving over her boy in gaol through his smoking; and I do not set much value on such a recruit to the temperance cause as he is."

"A boy in gaol, through the minister smoking! How was that?" asked the lady.

Then came the sad, sad story which made me wonder more at the complacency with which Christian, but not "Christ-like" ministers can smoke regardless of injury from their evil example. Here are the facts then told by the good man who knew all the parties concerned, and vouched for the truth of the narrative.

The widow was one of the oldest Methodists in the place, and had been greatly esteemed as a consistent Christian woman. Her husband died when her boy was a little lad, and she was made the bread-winner, which compelled her to leave the child to the care of neighbours when he was not at school, and he learned many things which grieved his mother, and grew disobedient and refractory at home, by the loss of home training.

The good woman insisted, however, that he should attend the Sunday-school of her own Church, and the Band of Hope, and that he should not smoke.

A few years passed and the boy was a nuisance in the Sunday-school, and it was a question, more than once, if he should not be expelled; but, for the respect in which his good mother was held, he was tolerated as a scholar for some time.

At length the minister in question was appointed to that circuit. His usual popularity crowded the church, and a revival added many new members to the society. Among the converts were several boys in the Bible-class, who were eager to be usefully employed. Some of these young Christians were allowed to assist in the Sunday-school, and knew of the insubordination and irregularity of the widow's son. The proposition was again raised at a teachers' meeting that the boy should be expelled unless some one would suggest new methods for influencing him. One of the young converts begged another term of forbearance, and volunteered to "look after" the wayward lad for the poor mother's sake. So, it was agreed that Tom (as we will call him) should try to make "Jim," the widow's son, his friend, in order to save him from evil associates. Each Sunday and through the week, Tom gave much time in trying to interest poor Jim, and to win his friendship.

For several weeks Tom steadily followed up this plan of personal endeavour to bring this lost sheep to a seeking Saviour, and comfort the mother's heart by steadying her wilful boy. Hopeful results followed. Jim attended Sunday-school more regularly and after his promotion to the Bible-class, with older lads, took a new interest in the lessons as well as improved his general behaviour. He respected his mother's commands enough not to smoke at home; but, after he began to earn a little money for himself he thought he had a right to smoke if he liked as well as "other fellows." He kept his pledge against drink, and therefore did not find his way to the "public-house," as a drink-shop is called in England.

The summer came; they lived in a lovely neighbourhood—the hills, valleys, river, gardens, a fine old castle and other objects of interest made a picture which the most uncultivated were bound to admire. While the trees were so many orchestras for the sweet singers on wings, which are nowhere so musical as in one of the lovely southern valleys of England. One of these bright sunny Sundays—when it seemed a pleasure to live and breathe—all nature in a joyous hush, Tom called for his friend, after their early dinner, to be in good time for their afternoon Bible-class. It was too early for school. The two lads walked a little way out of town and

turned off the high road to lean upon a five-barred gate, where they could see a magnificent panorama spread out, and listen to the sweet music which filled the air. They were not artistically trained, and could not have told you why they so enjoyed the sights and sounds around them, but they could take the pleasure all the same, so far as they could appreciate it. There was a bend in the road, so that they could hear without being readily seen by passers-by, partly hid by the high bushy hedges and trees. The time was nearly up for their return, and to Tom's dismay, Jim took out his pipe and a small package of tobacco, and proceeded to fill the pipe, and then replaced his frail tobacco pouch in his pocket, and took out a box of matches. Tom silently prayed for wisdom to say the right word to his companion, and presently said, "Jim, don't light your pipe; we shall be going back presently, before you will have done smoking, and you know you promised to go to the Bible-class with me to-day." Jim admitted the promise and said he was going with him, and added "What harm is there in a few whiffs out here?" His friend said, "One harm will be you will not be done in time, and another harm is you will smell of smoke as you go into the school. Besides, it's a dirty thing anyway, and I'd be ashamed to spend money in 'baacca' when my mother worked as hard as yours to keep the home together." Tom hardly knew that he had put three good arguments against smoking in a small compass,—waste of time, waste of health, and waste of money, besides the dishonesty to the poor mother, and disobedience implied. Thus making five good reasons why his friend should not smoke. Jim seemed half-convinced, and with his filled pipe in one hand, and the match ready to strike in the other, stood hesitating.

It was in fact a switch in his life-line, and there was the free-will to do, or leave undone, illustrated. Tom was his good angel at the moment, trying his best to help the poor lad to turn the switch in the right direction. There was an invisible angel of darkness there by that gateway too, trying to turn the switch on the down-grade. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One" had been prayed by their favourite pastor in the morning service, and both lads had joined in that prayer. Tom ventured another word, "Now, Jim, don't light it; shy it away, and have no more to do with it. Keep a sweet mouth, and let's go back. I'm sure you'll be glad some day."

Poor tempted Jim was "almost persuaded" to leave his pipe unlighted, and take his friend's advice, but the devil seemed to know how to turn that switch by the hand of an "angel of light." With pipe and match on the way to his pocket, the lads heard footsteps along that smooth, hard road, and both recognized the well-known voice of their minister. Neither lad spoke; but they looked over their shoulder to see who went by. As the burly form came into view they saw with him one of the local preachers. The two had agreed to walk together to their country appointments as far as the cross-road. The popular minister was holding his cigar-case towards his companion, as the two preachers came in sight, and did not see the lads at the gate. He was saying, and the lads heard it plainly, "Will you have one?" The local brother with a grave face said, "No, thank you; I never smoke, and wish you didn't." The jovial pastor said, "You are foolish not to. I couldn't get on without it," and as he spoke, selected a cigar from the case, nibbled the end, pocketed the case, lighted a fragrant fuscio and applied it to his loved weed, and small clouds of smoke floated over the pastor's head as the two Gospel messengers of salvation passed on their way.

Surely never was more successful example for evil