

The Standard.

BY F. W. COLE.

FROM swart Arabia's scorching sands
A poisoned fountain rose,
And with its stream to distant lands
Spread dark and direful woes.

The nations drank destruction thence
With wild and strange delight;
I like sin it seemed to please the sense,
Like sin it left its blight.

This fountain's stream became a flood,
And angels wept to see
Men drink and bathe their hands in blood—
Their souls in agony.

The good grew pale—but men of prayer
Remembered still the word,
And on the verge of blank despair
Cried, "Lift the standard, Lord!"

Now let his faithfulness be told,
That cry was not in vain,
'Twas reared and every healing fold
Gave forth the word "ABSTAIN!"

Behold! it floats! and nations flock
To follow in its train!
While city spire and mountain rock
Give back the word, "ABSTAIN!"

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JANUARY 20, 1894.

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS.

BY REV. W. F. CRAFTS.

WHILE the people who work in Bands of Hope and Juvenile Temperance Unions have for their watchword, "Save the Boys," there are other people in the world whose motto seems to be, "Destroy the Children." Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, enslaved the Jews who were in his land, and made their lives bitter with bondage, but God's blessing made them increase in numbers, in spite of all the king's hatred and cruelty; and so the king gave the command that all the boys that should be born should be killed.

In these days the king that tries hardest to kill the children is King Alcohol—that which makes people drunk—beer and rum. King Alcohol does not kill children by a gun or sword in a minute, but he kills them slowly, by poisoning them with intoxicating drinks.

Sometimes he gets a father to help him. A man who was in jail for killing another man, and was to be hung in a few days, said, "A teaspoonful of rum toddy brought me to this—made me commit this awful murder, for which I am to be hung. When I was a child, my father was in the habit of taking me on his knee at dinner time and giving me a teaspoonful out of his glass. By this means the taste for drink was acquired, under the influence of which I did the crime for which I am about to suffer."

Sometimes King Alcohol destroys the

boys by getting them to go to drinking saloons, where they learn not only to drink, but to gamble and to be licentious.

A friend of mine, who is a temperance man, counted four hundred boys and girls in one saloon at one time, although the law said that no one should sell intoxicating drinks to any boy or girl.

Dr. Willard Parker, one of the greatest doctors in the world, says that one-third of all the people that die in New York are brought to death by the influence of this awful poison, alcohol, which slowly but surely kills the boys who begin to drink it.

I am thinking now of some other people whose watchword was, "Kill the Boys." There were ten shepherds, grown-up men, brothers, who saw their younger brother, about seventeen years old, coming to bring them food and news from home; and because they thought the father, as most fathers do, loved the youngest boy better than the older ones, they took him and threw him into an empty well, and then took him out when they found a chance to sell him to some cruel Arabs, who was going into a far country, where they would make him a slave. You know that I mean Joseph, and you remember how God helped him to get out of slavery and become a ruler.

There are ten brothers that in these days sell boys into slavery. Their names are "Brandy Sauce," "Bitters," "Cider," "Beer," "Ale," "Wine," "Gin," "Brandy," "Rum," and "Whiskey." These ten are brothers, because all of them contain the alcohol that makes people drunk. When one has been taking brandy sauce in food, or bitters with alcohol in them for medicine, or cider, or beer, or wine, at first they don't care much for it, and can stop as easy as not; but by-and-bye they cannot get along without it. They cannot go by a liquor shop without going in, they have such a strong appetite for these drinks. And then they want the stronger drinks, ale and brandy and whiskey. It seems as if a chain was around their necks to draw them into the liquor shop to make them drunk almost every day, although they know that they are wasting their money, injuring their bodies, and making their friends unhappy. Let me explain to you how it is.

I take this thread and tie this boy's arms. He can snap the threads as easy as not. That is like the boy that is just beginning to drink. He can stop as easily as not. Now I tie this boy's hands with twine, and it is harder to break it, but he can do it. That is like the boy who has been drinking for a little while, who has got to liking the liquor, but can stop if he tries. Now I take this large rope, and I tie this boy's hands and feet with it, and no matter how hard he pulls, he cannot break it. That is like a man who has been drinking for a long time. When he finds that drink is making him poor and sick and unhappy, foolish and cruel, he tries to stop drinking, but he cannot do it of himself. Now I cut these knots, and this boy is free. That is like the case of a drunkard who could not break himself away from drinking, who prayed that God would help him, and asked God's people to help him by their prayers, and gave his heart to Jesus to be a Christian. And so God gave him new strength, so that he could break away from drinking.

"The Lion of Judah can break every chain,
And give us the victory again and again."

Herod was another who had for his watchword, "Destroy the Children." When he heard that Jesus was born in Bethlehem to be a king, he did not understand that Jesus was to be a king of men's hearts, and thought he was to be king with a crown on his head, with soldiers about him; that he would take the throne and the palace where Herod was, and drive him away. Herod did not know just what house to find Jesus in, and so he told his soldiers to kill all the children that were two years of age and under, in Bethlehem and the country around it, so that he might be sure to kill the little king; but God warned the mother of Jesus of the coming danger, and told her to flee away into Egypt; so Jesus' life was saved.

The Herod who tries to kill the children to-day is King Alcohol; but God, in the Bible, warns us to flee away from him, to keep away from the saloons, to work in the Bands of Hope, to take the pledge and stick

to it, to spend our evenings at home. Especially God says to us in his word, "Look not upon the wine when it is red. At the last it biteth like a serpent. Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." And so we can escape from this Herod of alcohol, and grow up to be Christ-like in this world, and by-and-by to be kings in heaven forever and ever.

TELL THE GOOD-TIDINGS.

A PROFESSOR in one of our principal colleges was noted among his fellow-teachers for his habit of addressing privately the young men in his care upon the subject of their personal relations to Christ.

"Do they not resent your appeals as an impertinence?" asked one of his fellow-professors.

"No," was the reply. "Nothing is of such interest to any man as his own soul and its condition. He will never resent words of warning or comfort if they are prompted by genuine feeling."

"When I was a young man," he added, "I felt as you do. My wife's cousin, a young fellow not yet of age, lived in our house for six months. My dread of meddling was such that I never asked him to be present at family worship, or spoke to him on the subject of religion. He fell into the company of a wild set, and was rapidly going to the bad. When I reasoned with him, I spoke of Christ.

"Do you call yourself a Christian," he asked, assuming an astonished look.

"I hope so," I replied.
"But you are not. If you were, Christ must be your best friend. Yet I have lived in your house for six months, and you have never once named his name to me. No, he is nothing to you."

"I never have forgotten that rebuke." The superintendent of the London police told an American visitor to Scotland Yard lately that when a noted criminal was visited before his execution, by a clergyman, he listened to the story of Jesus and his suffering upon the cross in silence, and then, springing to his feet, said:

"Is this true? He came to save men like me?"

"Yes, it is true."
"And you sit here quietly! If I believed that story and were free, I would walk barefoot over the world but I would tell it to every living man!"

Even the great truths of religion grow hackneyed to our impatient ears and trivial minds.

THE PROPHECY.

BY MARY DWINELL CHELLIS.

"HALLO there, Bill! What are you doing?"

"Smoking."
"Don't it make you sick?"
"Not a bit of it. I'm too old a stager for that."

"You ain't as old as I am, and I think I am young. I tried smoking once, and that was enough for me. I thought I was going to die, I was so sick."

"Hain't you tried it again?"
"No, sir; and what is more, I sha'n't."
"When was it?"

"The next day after Cross came here. I was fool enough to think it would be smart to do as he did; but, as grandpa says, I saw the folly of it before it was too late, and there was no great harm done."

"Well, I began the very day you did, and I don't believe you was any sicker than I was. But when I make up my mind to do thing I do it; and to tell the truth, it has taken me all this time to get so I can smoke and enjoy it. Now I'm all right."

"According to my way of thinking, you are all wrong. Father says he wouldn't have me learn to smoke for five thousand dollars. He says I should be so much out of pocket. It costs a good deal to smoke in style. He says he knew a man who used to spend a dollar a day for cigars right along. I would rather invest money in some other way."

"Pshaw! most every man smokes, and when I grow up I want to do like the rest. I should feel pretty flat if I happened to be with a lot of fellows that were smoking and I couldn't take a cigar without making myself sick. You won't catch me in such a scrape as that. Cross can smoke half a day right along."

"He would stop long enough to drink a glass of beer now and then. Cold water tastes pretty flat when a fellow's mouth is all burnt up with tobacco."

"That's a fact, but Cross has money enough to pay for all the beer he wants. He says he began to smoke when he was eight years old."

"He looks like it: he isn't half-grown. Three years older than I am, and only up to my shoulders! I thought you wanted to be tall and large."

"I do, and I expect to be."

"So do I. I don't calculate to lose a foot or two in height, and spoil my teeth, and muddle my brain, for the sake of being ready to smoke with some fellows I may happen to meet ten years from now. I sha'n't do it, and you'd better not. The next thing, you will be drinking beer; then something stronger, and more of it, until you won't care what else comes to you if you can only get all the rum and tobacco you want."

"That's hard talk, Joe—rather more than I can stand. If I was in the habit of fighting I should call you to account. When a man gets so he don't care for anything but rum and tobacco he is a drunkard. You don't think I shall ever be a drunkard, do you?"

"I hope not; but you are only twelve years old, and if you have got a taste for beer and tobacco you have taken the first step. I never thought so much about it until father talked to me, the night after I tried smoking, but he said a young boy couldn't expect to make the best of himself in any way if he used tobacco. It will drain his pocket of small change, weaken his body, and dull his brains. Some men get so used to having a quid rolling round in their mouths they can't talk without it. They stutter and stammer, as though they had lost a part of their tongues. I hope you won't chew as well as smoke. One is bad enough, but take them together they are too bad to be tolerated. As for me I will have none of the filthy stuff."

The two boys who talked thus with each other were schoolmates, and their parents neighbours, so that seldom a day passed when they were not together; but from the time when one decided not to use tobacco and the other resolved to smoke like "an old stager" their paths in life diverged.

Less than a score of years have gone by since then; yet the prophecy, counted so severe, has been literally fulfilled, as Bill acknowledges, with bitter regrets that he had not heeded the warning of his old-time friend. He is a besotted drunkard, without hope of reform, replying to all expostulations: "As long as I use tobacco I must drink liquor; and I would rather die than give up tobacco."

ORIGIN OF THE TERM "METHODIST."

THE story of the origin of Methodism and of its name is briefly told. In the year 1729, in Oxford University, there were five students, among whom were the brothers John and Charles Wesley, who formed a society having for its object the study of the Bible in the original language, and to aid each other in mutual spiritual improvement. They partook of the Lord's Supper weekly; and fasted twice a week; they systematically arranged their time for self-examination, meditation, prayer, and religious teaching. They were active in public worship, in observance of Church ordinances, in benevolence to the sick and poor, and in their visits to the prisons. They were ridiculed by their fellow students, and were called the Sacramentarians, the Godly, the Holy Club, and Bible Moths. They were afterwards joined by James Hervey and the famous George Whitefield, and were so faithful in their appointment of their time that one of the students, partly from fact and partly in derision, termed them Methodists; and this term, though often used reproachfully and to express enthusiasm or fanaticism, has become the acknowledged name of one of the largest branches of the Christian Church. These students, with no thought of organization, simply sought the increase of holiness and earnestness in their own and in the hearts

lives of offending