

Selections.

WILD OATS.

I saw a fair youth, with brow broad and white,
And an eye that was burning with intellect's light;
And his face seemed to glow with the wealth of his mind,
And I said, "He will grace and ennoble mankind;
He is nature's own king."
We met yet again. I saw the youth stand,
With a bowl that was flowing and red in his hand;
He filled it again, and again did he quaff,
And his friends gathered round him, and said with a laugh,
"He is sowing his oats."
Ah! his eye was too bright, and his cheek was too red.
And I gazed on the youth with a feeling of dread,
And again as he laughingly lifted the bowl,
I turned from the scene with a shuddering soul—
It was terrible seed.
We met but once more, I found in the street
A corpse half enveloped in mud and in sleet:
A foul bloated thing: but I saw in the face
Something that told of his boyhood's grace—
He had reaped the dire crop.
O, youths that are sowing wild oats, do you know
That the terrible seeds you are planting will grow!
Have you thought how your God will require some day
An account of the life you are throwing away?
Have you thought, O rash youth?
It will soon be too late, there is no time to waste;
Then throw down the cup! do not touch, do not taste!
It is filled with destruction, and sorrow, and pain;
Throw it down! throw it down! do not lift it again!
It will soon be too late.
—*Watchword.*

LITTLE NELL.

Little Nell, the drunkard's child,
Down the storm-swept city street,
While the winds blew fierce and wild
And the rain in torrents beat,
Ran to a rum-shop door and bar,
Crying, "Oh, where is papa?"
Golden curls the winds had tossed
Over forehead high and fair,
Rosebud mouth, its smiles all lost,
Face grown pale with pain and care,
Tattered garments, bare, brown feet,
A drunkard's child—but oh, how sweet!
"Mamma's dying! Where's papa?"
This the child's heart-broken cry.
"Where the lowest rum-shops are
I shall find him. Mamma'll die
And leave her little Nell alone.
Oh, even now she may be gone!"
"It may be papa will come
Home with me when mamma's gone,
And drink no more the cruel rum.
Then little Nell won't be alone;
And papa will be good to me,
And kind as once he used to be."
She hurried on to find the place,
But in the wild storm lost her way.
Paler grew the sad, sweet face,
And the sun's first morning ray
Kissed lips grown cold, the soul had flown,
Nevermore to be alone.
While the storm beat fierce and wild,
In a hovel bare and lone,
"Mamma" died and left her child
Wandering in the streets alone.
Then God's angel came for Nell
And took her home with Him to dwell.
But the father—where was he?
Voter! drunk in your saloon!
Not yours? Then whose can it be?
Like words and music of a tune,
You write the words—then play and sing;
You license—they holla music ring.
—*Mrs. P. R. Gibson in N. T. Advocate.*

A LIFE PICTURE.

The following has been narrated by a well-known lecturer as a tale that had been told to him by an aged woman in the same words, as nearly as may be, in which he gives it:—
"I was married young, too young—Oh, that was the terrible mistake of my life. My husband determined to go West. I must leave my home.
"Father was a drunkard, mother an invalid, with a large family younger than myself around her. Many a time I have stood between her and an infuriated father maddened with liquor. Oh, these were sad days, from which it is not to be wondered that I longed to escape.
"The day came for parting. My dear invalid mother clung to me in a passionate flood of tears, and it seemed as if she could not let me go. I knew I should never see her again.
"Oh, that last scene in my father's family! It is present with me to-day—those sad despairing looks of my gentle mother; the unrestrained grief which filled the room with sobs and cries from my dear little brothers and sisters!
"The end came, and as I journeyed to my western home, it seemed to me that no heavier sorrow could ever befall me. We bought a tract of land on the banks of a small river, put it under a heavy mortgage, for our purse was light, and began a struggle for life.
"Children blessed our home, and we were gaining slowly, when the demon which had made my life thus far miserable came on again in hot pursuit. My husband, in his visits to the neighboring city for market, was ensnared by designing men.
"I was too well skilled in reading even the smallest signs of the presence of alcohol not to mark the beginning of my husband's ruin. I pleaded with him. I told him the history of my father. He promised, but it is the old story I have to tell. Meantime our oldest child was stricken with a fever. We hung breathless over him for seven nights and days, and then, at sunset, one evening, while a crimson glory filled the west, our little one was taken in the unseen arms of angels and carried to the bosom of the Father.
"As we stood above the white face of the dead, and gazed into the calm and painless features of our firstborn, once so pain-distorted, I asked my husband solemnly to pledge himself never to touch, taste or handle the accursed thing. He promised, and a star of hope shone in the rayless darkness of this great sorrow.
"A year passed and the star sank to rise no more. Late in autumn, while my husband was revelling in drunken orgies in the city, a terrible storm arose, the river overflowed its banks, and in the morning a scene terrible enough to appal the stoutest hearts burst upon my view. The waters were threatening to carry away our little house every moment, and we must flee for our lives. Upon boards and logs we tried to float, but one by one I saw the helpless little dears cast a look at me, utter a cry of despair, and sink beneath the waves. I escaped with a babe upon my bosom.
"When the father became sober enough to comprehend the situation he uttered a groan of despair, and from that time forth yielded himself entirely to his appetite for strong drink, and in less than three months died in a drunken fit.
"At each of these blows I thought I knew what sorrow was, but a still greater revelation awaited me. After my husband died the land was wrested from me by fraud, and I was alone with my babe in the world.
"I cannot tell you what a fearful struggle I had to supply our daily wants. Oh, these were years of loneliness, poverty, toil, want and suffering! I would bear till my heart seemed bursting, then an uncontrollable flood of tears would restore me to calmness.
"I determined by the help of God that my son should not follow in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. If I could leave him no dowry of wealth, I would leave him my own untarnished name and those Godly principles of truth and soberness which should make a man of him. He was bright and receptive, and promised to be the fulfilment of the fondest mother's expectations.
"But necessity compelled me to bind him over as an apprentice to a man I knew little of, but who held out flattering inducements. Soon I found out my sad mistake. With his other work, the man kept a bar. My son objected to tending a bar; I had filled his soul with a mortal hatred of the traffic,

fearing, lest if I did not fortify his principles, inherited tendencies to drink might destroy him.
"Oh, it was a demon to whom I had committed my boy. He used brute violence to make him tend that bar. My boy would come home some nights—he had to run away to do it—and show me great blue marks across his back, and he would beg of me not to let him go back.
"But I was helpless. The man was rich and influential, and determined. So I told my boy to bear it the best he could till his time expired. It is a long and terrible story, the story of that boy's wrongs. I could see that blows and taunts and brow-beatings were doing their devilish work. Besides, by some art or other, he had been induced to drink.
"I shorten the story. In a rage one day he slew his drunken master; was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged. I spent the last night of my poor boy's life with him in prison. He made a full revelation of all the wrongs he had suffered. At times I felt my brain whirling, seething like molten metal on fire. The memory of that night after a lapse of thirty years often turns my days and nights into sleepless agony.
"Rum has been the bane of my life. I woke to consciousness in a drunkard's home. Rum robbed me of a father's love and killed my mother by inches. Rum bereft my children of a father's help and buried them in the waves of a flood. Rum filled my youngest son's life with all the bitterness and degradation of slavery, and at last stole away his senses, his manliness, his sweet young life itself. When this last blow came—so crushing, so terrible, I knew then what sorrow was—never before.
"I cannot produce the pathos of this story, nor tell how it has burned in my memory ever since. That sorrow-laden life was soon ushered into the presence where the weary are at rest. But woman's wrongs remain.
"Oh, alcohol, thou withering curse, drying up the springs of domestic love, social happiness, eternal hope, as if a sirocco blast had swept a desert into the human soul!
"Pile mountains high the wrongs that women have borne from every other source, and they dwindle to mole-hills beside what she has suffered from alcohol. It will put a consummation to the deepest human miseries, which will make them all but faint shadows of this terrible spectre.
"Over the doors of one of the horrible places of his imagination Dante wrote: "Who enters here must leave all hope behind."
"My young friends, he who crosses the threshold of the dramshop leaves more than hope behind; he leaves his honor, his reputation, his earthly prospects and hopes of immortal glory. *The Germantown Guide.*

STOP THAT BARGAIN, CITIZENS.

Why in the name of religion; why in the name of reason; why in the name of policy and common sense, do we allow rum to trail its serpent blight up and down our land, over and under our government, in and through our homes?
Its bulwark is the saloon. This we know to be a curse. We treat it as an outlaw already, for we license it. We do not license flour mills and candy factories. On no other industry do we lay a restraining imposition. Why upon rum? Because we know it is a public enemy, and if it must forage off our vitals it must render partial tribute.
What a weak, cowardly, criminal relation is this governmental confederacy with rum! Would we build forts and sell to our enemies the right to destroy them to give their guns practice? Would we plant forests and sell to pirates and marauders the right to despoil the trees if they only paid us for the bark? Why build homes, those most sacred of altars, and exchange them for the wherewithal to build almshouses and jails?
If our moral natures are too numb to perceive this iniquity, are our eyes of shrewd sense too dim to distinguish the folly of throwing away dollars for dimes? In other words, subtract if you will every heartache and every sigh and every wreck of soul for which the liquor traffic is responsible and cast up accounts in coin. Does anybody doubt that the despicable infamy costs thrice what it pays in license; costs in public jails, in poorhouses, in police protection, to protect it and to pursue its victims?

The saloon is already outwaded. Now why treat it as a favored convict whom we let loose for a consideration? Stop that bargain, fellow-citizens, and stop it now! *The Ram's Horn.*

A TRUTHFUL FORTUNE-TELLER.

A man was having his fortune told. "I see," said the "seventh daughter of the seventh daughter," contracting her eyebrows, "I see the name of John."
"Yes," said the sitter, indicating that he had heard the name before.
"The name seems to have given you a great deal of trouble."
"It has."
"This John is an intimate friend."
"That's so," he said wonderingly.
"And often leads you to do things you are sorry for."
"True; every word."
"His influence over you is bad."
"Right again."
"But you will soon have a serious quarrel, when you will become estranged."
"I'm glad of that. Now spell out his whole name."
The fortune-teller opened one eye and carefully studied the face of the visitor. Then she wrote some cabalistic message, and handed it to him in exchange for her fee.
"Do not read it until you are at home," she said solemnly. "It is your friend's whole name."
When he reached home he lit the gas and gravely examined the paper. There he read, in picket-fence characters, the name of his friend: "Demi-John." *Detroit Free Press.*

SOME PARAPHRASES.

ASK YOURSELF IF THEY DO NOT HAVE A PERSONAL APPLICATION.

Covering a sin by licensing it is about as safe as coddling an angry rattlesnake.

You can measure a man's prohibition sentiments by his ballot.

Each citizen aids the cause of rum-removal much by what he says but most by his ballot.

A man may become a successful hypocrite by praying for "temperance" on three hundred and sixty-four days, and voting for license-restriction on one day in the year.

Liquor "regulation" is the devil's concession to the hypocrite's love of respectability.

The man who insists upon "voting the ticket that is most certain to win" must part company with honesty before he can do it.

When the devil goes to church he usually sits with a liquor-license member in the family pew.

There is something wrong with one's politics when they merit the protest of his prayers.

It takes no longer to reach hell by the side door than by the front one of a licensed saloon.

Why need a Christian spend his time "regulating" what Christ came to destroy?

While the devil can keep a man voting for rum, he loses no sleep over any racket he may make about religion. —*The Constitution.*

DASH DOWN THE CUP.

"The waters have gone over me, but out of the black depths, could I be heard, I would cry out to all those who have set a foot in the perilous flood. Could the youth to whom the flavor of the first wine is as delicious as the opening scenes of life, or the entering upon some newly discovered paradise, look into my dissolution, and be made to understand what a dreary thing it is when he shall feel himself, going down a precipice with open eyes and passive will—to see all godliness emptied out of him, and yet not able to forget the time it was otherwise—to bear about the piteous spectacle of his own ruin; could he see my feverish eye, feverish with last night's drinking, and feverish looking for to-night's repetition of the folly; could he but feel the body of death out of which I cry hourly with feeble outcry to be delivered, it were enough to make him dash the sparkling beverage to the earth, in all the pride of its mantling temptation." —*Charles Lamb.*