

The Puzzled Census-taker.

BY JOHN O. BAXE.

"Got any boys?" the marshal said,
To the lady from over the Rhine;
And the lady shook her flaxen head,
And civilly answered, "Nein" (No)

"Got any girls?" the marshal said,
To the lady from over the Rhine,
And again the lady shook her head,
And civilly answered, "Nein"

"But some are dead?" the marshal said,
To the lady from over the Rhine,
And again the lady shook her head,
And civilly answered, "Nein"

"Husband, of course?" the marshal said,
To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again she shook her flaxen head,
And civilly answered, "Nein."

"Now what do you mean by shaking
your head,
And always answering, 'Nine'?"
"Ich kann nicht Englisch!" civilly said
The lady from over the Rhine.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MARCH 12, 1898.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

MARCH 20, 1898.

By church service.—Luke 4. 16; Malachi 3. 16, 17; Heb. 10. 25.

JESUS IN THE SYNAGOGUE.

Luke 4. 16. There was a synagogue wherever there were ten families of Jews located. There were more than 400 in Jerusalem. On the Sabbath, when service was being conducted, a portion of Scripture previously selected was always read, either by the presiding officer, the ruler of the synagogue, or some person whom he selected. Jesus was called to read, and the lesson was in Isaiah, as here stated. The application proved that to him all the prophets gave witness. Please notice especially what verse 16 says, He went, as his custom was, to the synagogue on the Sabbath. A custom we should all observe.

ANCIENT PRACTICE.

Malachi 3. 16, 17. This text beautifully illustrates the communion of saints. See the character of the saints. They fear the Lord, not slavish but filial fear, a fear of offending, and prompting them to love God. They spake often one to another, as Methodists do in class-meetings. Too many people, instead of speaking one to another, often speak about each other, which is always injurious rather than beneficial. The Lord noticed and kept a record. This is a figurative expression, which signifies that God remembers all that transpires among his children.

DIVINE ESTIMATION.

Verse 17. They shall be mine. How encouraging are these words! The world may despise, but God owns and esteems and promises concerning them, that he will spare them. "Godliness is profitable unto all things." He will keep them from evil. But then, do not forget our duty—to serve him as a dutiful son serves his father.

IMPORTANT CAUTION.

Heb 10 25 Not forsaking or forgetting, etc. People often forsake the house of God, and allow little things to keep them away; things which would not hinder them from business or meeting friends are often enough to keep them from the house of God.

EXHORT ONE ANOTHER.

This is every Christian's duty, no matter whether he is a pastor or only a private member. Our exhortations should increase and continue through all the changing scenes of life. As the end of our pilgrimage dawns upon us, we are still to be concerned for our fellows. The service of the sanctuary always tends to personal benefit. Waiting upon God increases strength and brings glory to God.

PAUL THOMPSON—A TRUE STORY.

One afternoon, a few weeks since, while passing through one of the principal business streets of a large city, we came upon a crowd of schoolboys standing in front of a saloon. The boys had come out of the schoolhouse only a few minutes before, and had their books and slates, etc., in their hands. They were a company of bright, intelligent, happy-looking lads, but they all seemed deeply interested in something that was going on inside of that saloon. As they opened their ranks to make way for us to pass, we stopped and asked what it was that had attracted such a large crowd of boys.

"Paul Thompson's been in a fight in the saloon there, and a policeman has just gone to arrest him," said one of the boys.

While he was speaking a large, blue-coated, brass-buttoned officer came out, leading a man, or rather jerking him, by the coat-collar. The man in custody was young, with slight form and delicate features, and as we looked into his face we saw traces of intelligence and cultivation.

"He is drunk," said another boy, "and when he's drunk he's always ugly and wants to fight. This isn't the first time he has been taken, either."

The crowd of boys followed the policeman and his prisoner, and we soon lost sight of him. As we passed on we noticed the public school building was only a short distance from that saloon; many of the scholars had to pass by it every day. The same proprietor had been in possession of the building for ten years past. Only six years before, Paul Thompson had graduated from the high school. He was a scholar of high standing, too. But he had been in the habit of passing this dangerous corner for years before he graduated. He had been attracted to it in his boyhood, as the boys just spoken of had been, by some similar occurrence. He began by looking in to see what was going on behind the green screen doors. Then he stepped inside to hear what the men were talking about. The saloon-keeper noticed him, for he had a manly bearing, and belonged to a family in high standing.

He encouraged the boy's coming in with pleasant, flattering words, and one day he gave him a glass of beer to drink. Paul thought it was manly to take the offered glass, but he could only drink a part of it; he did not like the taste; it was bitter; but the saloon man patted him on the shoulder, and told him to drink as much as he could, and it would make a man of him. Paul knew it was wrong, and when he went home he felt ashamed to stay in the presence of his good, sweet mother. He could not look her in the face; every smile she gave him and every kind word made him feel more and more guilty. He resolved never to pass by that saloon again, but to go home another way, although it was much further. But somehow he did not go the other way but a few times. There seemed to be a fascination about that saloon, and he would linger around it. That was the beginning. Now we see Paul Thompson a constant frequenter of this same saloon. He had been going down, down, from bad to worse, for six years or more—the years, too, of his life which were the most important to him—the time when he ought to have been acquiring a true, honourable, manly character. His mother used to love to hear his step on the walk, and his cheerful, boyish whistle when he came bounding home from school, so happy and light-hearted. But now that dear mother listens and listens night after night for his step with an anxious heart. She has pleaded with prayers and tears for his reform; but the "habit begun in cobwebs has ended in iron chains." He is a slave to liquor. We trust his good mother's prayers will be heard, and that, through the mercy

and strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, he may break those iron chains. But we see where he is to-day. Now, boys, this case of Paul Thompson is a great warning to all of you. Don't stop at saloons, even to look in. Cross over to the other side, and shun those terrible places where so many have lost their manhood and their souls. Remember that every poor, miserable drunkard began his downward career when he took his first glass.—Youth's Temperance Banner.

SAVED A FARM.

You cannot afford to smoke, you cannot afford to chew. You either take very good tobacco, or you take very cheap tobacco. If it is cheap I will tell you why it is cheap. It is made of burdock and lampblack and sawdust and cc's foot and plantain leaves and fuller's earth and salt and alum and lime and a little tobacco, and you cannot afford to put such a mess as that in your mouth. But if you use expensive tobacco, do you not think it would be better for you to take the amount of money which you are now expending for this herb, and which you will expend during the course of your life, if you keep the habit up, and with it buy a splendid farm, and make the afternoon and the evening of your life comfortable?

There are young men whose life is going out inch by inch from cigarettes. Now, do you not think it would be well to listen to the testimony of a merchant of New York, who said this: "In early life I smoked six cigars a day at six and a half cents each. They averaged that. I thought to myself one day, I'll just put aside all I would consume in cigars and all I would consume if I kept on in the habit, and I'll see what it will come to by compound interest." And he gives this tremendous statistic: "Last July completed thirty-nine years since, by the grace of God, I was emancipated from the filthy habit, and the saving amounted to the enormous sum of \$29,102.03 by compound interest. We lived in the city, but the children, who had learned something of the enjoyment of country life from their annual visits to their grandparents, longed for a home among the green fields. I found a very pleasant place in the country for sale. The cigar money came into requisition, and I found it amounted to a sufficient sum to purchase the place, and it is mine." Now, boys, you take your choice. Smoking without a home, or a home without smoking. This is common sense as well as religion.

REV. JOHN WESLEY.

GIVES HIS CANDID OPINION OF THE TRAFFIC IN DISTILLED SPIRITS.

"Neither may we gain by hurting our neighbour in his body. Therefore we may not sell anything which tends to impair health. Such is eminently all that liquid fire commonly called drams, or spirituous liquors. It is true these may have a place in medicine; they may be of use in some bodily disorders, although there would rarely be occasion for them were it not for the unskillfulness of the practitioner. Therefore, such as prepare and sell them only for this end may keep their conscience clear. But who are they? Who prepare them only for this end? Do you know ten such distillers in England? Then excuse these. But all who sell them in the common way, to any that will buy, are poisoners-general. They murder his Majesty's subjects by wholesale, neither does their eye pity or spare. They drive them to hell like sheep. And what is their gain? Is it not the blood of these men? Who then would envy their large estates and sumptuous palaces? A curse of God is in the midst of them; the curse of God cleaves to the stones, the timber, the furniture of them! The curse of God is in their gardens, their walks, their groves, a fire that burns in the nethermost hell! Blood, blood is there; the foundation, the floor, the walls, the roof, are stained with blood!"

DOGS IN HARNESS.

Dog-carts, not the elegant carriages known in England and the United States by this technical term, but two-wheeled vehicles to which dogs are harnessed, are one of the features of Brussels, and are to be seen in other cities and towns in Belgium, Germany and Holland. Those who have visited Belgium's capital will remember how often they saw in the streets and market-places of that busy city, carts with milk or produce drawn by the combined force of women and dogs. The dog is assuredly no mean companion. He tugs with might

and main at his simple harness, not only willing but anxious to do his full share. He rarely needs the whip to call forth his best efforts. A word or a gesture is sufficient to induce him to exert to the utmost his muscular power.

So extensively are dogs employed in this way, that our State Department has been at the pains to gather much information about their use as draft animals in Holland, Belgium and Germany. England has a law forbidding it, on the ground of the abuses it is believed to involve Paris, without any such prohibition, though a city where the economies of life are studied so successfully, makes but little use of dogs in the capacity of draft animals.

Nowhere in the world, except possibly among the Esquimos, are so many dogs put into the transportation business as in Belgium. In Brussels and suburbs more than 10,000 of them are thus employed. They have driven out the donkey altogether. They are hitched to carts in single, double, triple and even quadruple teams, the carts weighing from 50 to 150 pounds. They are used for all kinds of light work, by bakers, butchers, washerwomen, marketmen and others. In most cities persons are not allowed to ride behind them; but the Belgian peasant, after he has sold his produce and reaches the city limits on his return, allows his dog-team to draw him home. They do not seem to mind it at all that they have a load both ways, but trot along at a good speed toward home.

The cart-dog is of no particular breed. He must be of good size and weight, of course, to be able to do his work satisfactorily; but nobody cares about his pedigree. He is easily trained, generally in company with an older dog. He is first accustomed to harness and then allowed to practice at pulling. The harness consists of a breast strap, girth and traces, with saddles and tug, if the dog is hitched ahead of the cart. The food, in addition to the scraps that come from the family table, is a kind of bread in which some coarse meat is included, milk and vegetables. The cost of their keep is, of course, very small indeed.

Dogs quickly fall into the ways of business. They soon learn where to stop, and how long, and in the absence of their master or mistress defend the contents of the cart with the utmost vigilance and fidelity. They often have long hours and hard work, and some of them are drawn out of shape by hard pulling; but they seem to like the life, and if left at home chained up utter most emphatic protests. When the time comes to get ready they caper about and show all the signs of joy which the most leisurely and aristocratic members of the canine race evince when the master offers to take them for a run or a hunt.

It is said that a team of dogs will take a light cart from Ghent to Brussels, or back again, a distance of thirty-four miles, in three hours, while horses require four hours. Their endurance is great. They will draw a load from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m., with brief intervals for rest without extraordinary fatigue. From 150 to 200 pounds is about the load one dog can comfortably draw.

The value of a draft-dog ranges from \$10 to \$20 or more, according to size and age and other qualities. The Fleming seems to think that if he has a dog he has a "pull," and in consequence there are few lazy dogs in Belgium.

STRONG DRINK AND QUICK DEATH.

Canada is credited with having the lightest drink-rate and also the lightest death-rate of all Christian countries. For the ten years ended 1890 her death-rate was only 14.01 per 1,000, and her drink-rate was the equivalent in absolute alcohol of 1.149 gallons of proof spirits per head per annum. For England, for these same ten years, the drink-rate was equal to 3.890 gallons of proof spirits per head, and the death-rate to 20.95 per annum of 1,000 of the population. For France both the drink-rate and the death-rate during the period in question were considerably higher. The death-rate was 21.99. Quebec, the province of Canada in which the temperance movement has made the least progress, has by much the higher rate of mortality. For the ten years in question it averaged 18.91 per 1,000 per annum. Its drink-rate yearly was the equivalent in absolute alcohol of 1.436 gallons of proof spirits.—Current History.

It is remarkable that all the diseases arising from drinking alcoholic liquors are liable to become hereditary to the third generation, increasing, if the cause be continued, till the family becomes extinct.—Darwin.