

## Turn It Down, Boys!

BY REV. EDWARD A. RAND.

If urged to lift the glass that tempts,  
In city grand or humble town,  
Be he that tempts the king or czar.  
Quick, turn your glass, and set it down!

If those that ask you vex and tease,  
Perhaps condemn you with a frown,  
Be firm—mind not the laugh and sneer—  
Quick, turn your glass and set it down!

If health you crave and strength of arm,  
Would keep your hardy hue of brown,  
Nor have the scarlet flush of sin,  
Quick, turn your glass and set it down!

If in your trouble others say,  
"In sea of drink your sorrows drown,"  
Look out, lest drowned the drinker be!  
Quick, turn your glass, and set it down!

Cold water, boys! Hurrah, hurrah,  
Will help to health, wealth, and renown,  
If urged to give these treasures up,  
Quick! turn your glass and set it down!

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## Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, JUNE 2, 1894.

## GOD WANTS CLEAN HEARTS, AS WELL AS CLEAN HANDS.

BY THE REV. W. F. CRAFTS.

(Mark 7: 1-23.)

WHEN Jesus was living with men on the earth, there were many people who had so little understanding of religion, that they thought it was more important to have clean hands than clean hearts.

These men washed their hands before each meal, which was very proper; and they washed their pots and cups and brazen vessels and platters very many times, which was all right; only they made the mistake of thinking that this would take the place of having their hearts washed from sin. God had taught these Jews that it was their duty to cleanse their bodies and also to cleanse their hearts, and they forgot the most important part about the heart cleansing. Jesus said to them: "From within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed."

Mothers sometimes wash out the mouths of their children with soap-suds, when they have been saying vulgar or profane or lying words; but the mouth isn't so much to blame as the heart, for a child always thinks a bad thing in his heart before he speaks it with his mouth. Mother can't reach down the throat and wash the bad thoughts out of your heart, and so you must ask God to do that.

Now I want to tell you a story about a boy who made the same kind of a mistake as those old Jews, about being clean.

"I say, Harry, what has made you take this wonderfully clean fit all of a sudden?" asked John Shelford of his little brother, who was drying his hands after a vigorous

pumping. "This is the seventh time I have seen you go to the pump and wash your hands to-day."

"Because I want to be strong," replied Harry.

"Well, but washing your hands won't make you strong."

"Yes, it will. The Bible says so."

"I don't believe it does," said John.

"I'm sure it does, though," returned Harry, positively.

"Papa read it at prayers this morning: 'He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger;' and Harry waved his arms in the air, and went through sundry gymnastic exercises, as if to see whether his numerous washings during the day had increased his strength.

"Well, you don't suppose that means really clean hands! You are a silly boy. You have had all your trouble for nothing."

"No, I haven't! I'll ask papa to-night if the Bible doesn't really mean what it says."

So, in the evening, when Mr. Shelford had come home from business, as soon as he had finished his tea, Harry began:

"Papa, doesn't the Bible say that if you have 'clean hands' you'll be strong?"

"Certainly, my boy," said Mr. Shelford, smiling. "I see you remember what we read this morning, how Job said: 'The righteous also shall hold on his way; and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.'"

"There," cried Harry, "I knew I was right! And washing your hands will make you strong, won't it?"

"It is very good for little boys to wash themselves, and it helps to make them strong and healthy if they keep clean; but there are some stains that we can't get out with soap and water, and it was freedom from these stains that the Bible meant. The other day I saw a little boy lift his hand to strike his sister. That made it far dirtier than if he had been making mud-pies for a whole day."

Harry blushed, and his papa went on:

"When I was a little boy I was taught it was my duty to keep my hands from picking and stealing. Picking, you know, means taking little things that don't belong to you; like stealing lumps of sugar out of mamma's cupboard, or picking fruit off the young trees that I tell you not touch."

"Then Eve made her hands dirty when she took the forbidden fruit," put in John, who feared the conversation was getting personal.

"Yes, indeed, she did; and no one can tell the number of soiled hands that have been the result of that action. Now, John, can you remember the name of a man who 'stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church?' That made his hands very dirty, indeed."

"That was Herod, papa, when he killed James and put Peter into prison."

"Yes; and do you know who it was who tried to clear himself from the blame of a very terrible act, by washing his hands?"

Both boys were silent, and Mr. Shelford asked again:

"Who took water and washed his hands, saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just person?'"

"Oh, that was Pilate, papa," said Harry, "when he let the people crucify Jesus."

"Yes; but the stain of sin was just as much on his soul after he had washed his hands as before; and it is the same with our sins, whether we call them little or great; we cannot get rid of them, or of their consequences, however we try to clear ourselves. No washing of our own will do it. So what must we do, Harry? When you make your hands dirty with doing wrong things, how can they be made clean?"

"God can wash them, papa. That is what you mean, isn't it? Because David said: 'Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.'"

"And Peter," added John, "asked the Lord Jesus to wash not only his feet, but his hands and his head; but Jesus said he need only have his feet washed."

"Yes; because, as the Lord said, he was washed already by faith in Christ's cleansing word. It was the same cleansing that David meant when he prayed: 'Create in me a clean heart, O God!' and I want my dear boys to pray too."

'Wash me, but not my feet alone—  
My hands, my head, my heart.'

Then you will have the blessing that is promised to him that 'hath clean hands and a pure heart; and you will every day grow 'stronger and stronger' in the best kind of strength, till you are like those to whom St. John said: 'I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong.'

## WHAT TO DO WITH ONE'S BIBLE.

BY REV. J. H. JAMES.

THE Bible of your own is not to be kept on a shelf merely to show as one of your treasures, but to be used every day. Many seem to think it is enough to be able to say, "I have read so many chapters in the Bible." The question in regard to all reading is not how much the eye has passed over, but how much has remained in the memory.

If you were far away from home, and your father were to write to you about coming home, telling you what railroads you were to travel on, and what trains to take, cautioning you about wrong trains, and telling you all you needed to know of your journey, it would be wise to have that letter with you and read all its directions very carefully, over and over again. This is just what our Heavenly Father has done in this book. He has pointed out the way to heaven, giving us many counsels to keep us from getting astray, and particular directions as to our course each day. Yet he knows that in order to get the full benefit of his instructions, we must be really interested in the book. So he has taught us many things by pleasing stories which help us to see how he wants his children to live. Now it is not best for one to go picking out here and there a story, and neglecting other things; yet I think most children will find more interest in the blessed Book if they learn first about Jesus and his life on earth from the parts of the New Testament that make these things plain. In reading the stories, however, we must be careful to get not merely the facts but the lesson they are meant to teach us.

The other day a boy, who is far from his parents at school, had a letter from home. He cannot read writing very well, so he took the letter to a friend to read to him that he might know exactly what his mother said to him. So you should get your friend to help you to understand this wonderful letter from heaven. The object of Sunday-school teaching and of preaching is to help people understand the Bible. It is delightful to talk over its precious lessons with friends wiser than ourselves. But no human friend can give us such help as we get by asking for the Holy Spirit. There are two precious promises about this matter of helping us to understand and do our Father's will that you will do well to find for yourselves, to often think of, and to ask the Lord to fulfil to you. John 14: 26, and Ezekiel 36: 27.

## ONE TEMPERANCE PLEDGE.

BY L. S.

NOT very long ago, in the northern part of Scotland, lived a little boy by the name of Charlie McNairn. He was a very thoughtful boy and had his own ideas about everything. One night he attended a temperance lecture in which total abstinence was very heartily encouraged, and he began to think it was not right to drink intoxicating liquors, even in small quantities. Having come to this conclusion, he made up his mind to sign the pledge, which he did very soon afterwards.

His father being a shopkeeper, kept a good deal of liquor for sale. He was therefore very much annoyed when he heard what Charlie had done; and, though the poor boy had promised not to drink, himself, he was obliged, for the sake of peace with his father, to sell out the stuff to others, very much against his will you may be sure.

One afternoon some of his playfellows came to see him. They were a good deal younger than Charlie, and after spending a very pleasant time, Mr. McNairn said:

"Charlie, you had better go home with the children, and see that no harm befalls them."

Charlie very gladly obeyed, for he was a favourite at the home of the children.

They reached home in good time, and Charlie went in to rest a few minutes, though he was not very tired. When he was about to leave, Mr. Paterson, the father of the children said:

"Bide a wee bit, laddie. Jeannie, bring something to warm the lad up before he goes. It's a cauld nicht, and he will be none the waur o' something warm."

Jeannie very gladly ran at her father's bidding and brought the toddy flask. Mr. Paterson poured out a glass, saying kindly, "Take that, my lad."

All through this ceremony, Charlie had been trembling with nervous excitement; for this was the first time he had been offered spirits, away from home, since he signed the pledge. Nevertheless he maintained his ground bravely, and stammered out the words, "No, thank you, sir, I'm temperate."

It required a great deal of strength and courage, but Charlie has never regretted making the sacrifice. Kind Mr. Paterson did not urge it, though he said he thought the lad had got some foolish notions into his head.

Charlie is now a very earnest temperance worker; but he says if he had not signed the pledge and kept it, he had little doubt about his now being a miserable drunkard his liking for drink was so strong.

Let all who read this bit of Charlie's experience take warning, so that our boys and girls may grow up to be noble and strong men and women!

## THE LUCKIEST FELLOW.

"FRED DIXON is the luckiest fellow in town; everythings he wants he gets; everything he undertakes prospers. Did you hear he has the place at Kelly's that so many have been trying to get?"

"You don't say so! Why, he is a very young man to fill so responsible a position."

"Yes," added the first speaker, "he always would stand on the top of the ladder in school; though not the brightest scholar, he managed to carry off the honours upon quitting school, which he did at an earlier age than most of his classmates, because he had to help to support his widowed mother and younger brothers and sisters. He only had to ask for a situation, and lo! all other applicants were ruled out, and Fred had the preference."

Boys, "Our Boys," do you know any Fred Dixon? If you do don't think it is luck that helps him along, gives him the laurels at school, aids him to obtain first-class situations, put him in places of trust and honour, where a good name or untarnished character is required. Look back in the pages of his life. See if he was not studious at school, fair and square in all his boyish games, gentlemanly and obliging, honest in all his dealings. Ask his friends if truthfulness, faithfulness to his duty, steadfastness of purpose are not his characteristics. Find out whether he has ever been known to frequent tippling shops, gambling dens and kindred places of vice; whether he spends his spare time in filling his mind with trashy literature, such as is thrown broadcast over our land, in the shape of dime novels. Depend upon it, boys, you will never be "the luckiest fellow in town," unless you earn it by honesty and integrity of character, and fidelity to all your undertakings.

## "DUTY FIRST, PLEASURE AFTERWARD."

"A DISAGREEABLE old saw," did you say? Perhaps it does seem so when the pleasure is very inviting and the duty very irksome by contrast; and yet I doubt if anyone ever made a success of life who turned the "old saw" and tried to make "pleasure first" the rule. It is said that a rich man who was poor when a boy was asked how he became rich. He replied, "My father taught me never to play until my work was finished, and never to spend money until I had earned it. If I had but one hour's work in the day, I must do that first; after that I was allowed to play. Then I could play with more pleasure than if I had an unfinished task. I formed the habit of doing everything in time. It soon became easy to do so."