

And know the money that they spend should some of it be mine. I'm ready oftentimes to wish that all the drink could be—  
With those that make and those that sell—flung down into the sea.  
For almost all the country's woe and crime would with them sink,  
And men might have a chance for good if it was not for the drink!  
—Leaves from the Banks of the Severn.

#### FOUR POUNDS OF STEAK, CUT PRETTY THICK.

BY COUSIN GERTRUDE.

William Dalton was a good workman, and earned good wages; he could have supplied his family with all the comforts of life, and given his children a good education, had he not been burdened and cursed with an appetite for strong drink. He spent most of his nights in bar rooms, where, of course, his money went for beer and whiskey, over which he and his companions thought they were having a good time. As he did not have the money in his pocket to pay for what he drank, the drinks were charged.

On Saturday night, as soon as he received his wages, he went to pay his "debts of honor" at the saloon. We wonder why he did not, sometimes, consider his grocery store, and meat market bills "debts of honor." There was little left for groceries, to say nothing of good warm clothes and shoes for the children, after his drinking bill was settled.

The good mother at home took in sewing or any kind of work she could find, that her strength would permit, and managed to keep them from starving, but the children were never clothed so as to be presentable at either day school or Sunday school.

One Saturday night, about 11 o'clock, found William, or Bill, as he was called, at the meat market. He sauntered in slowly, with dinner basket in his hand, and a very little money in his pocket. A few moments after a well-dressed gentleman walked in with a brisk step, threw some money on the counter, and said to the butcher in a quick, business-like voice: "Send up four pounds of steak to my house by 9 o'clock in the morning, will you? And cut it pretty thick." Then he walked out without noticing poor Bill. Bill saw him though; it was the proprietor of the saloon where he spent most of his money. Bill sat for some time thinking, until aroused by the butcher, with "Well, Bill, what do you want, 10 cents worth of liver? Do you want it charged as usual?"

Bill got up, shook himself, and started toward the door. "No, I do not want anything to-night."

"Oh, come, man, take something home to the kids. You are welcome to it."  
"No, not to-night," and Bill went out closing the door with a bang.

"Four pounds of steak, and cut it pretty thick," rang in his ears, and was all he could think of. How many weeks, even months, since he had had even a sufficiency of any kind of meat at his house, while the other man could order his "four pounds of steak cut pretty thick." The man had passed in front of him, and had not noticed him either!

He stopped at a grocery store and took home a few little bundles. The children, of course, were in bed, but the patient wife sat, hard at work, trying to patch up some of their clothes. She looked up timidly as Bill came in, and was surprised to see him looking so serious and sober. Wise woman that she was, she said nothing about it, but set the remains of their scanty supper before him; he ate little of it, and prepared to retire. He was so quiet she mustered up courage to ask him if he was sick. He replied with a kindly "No."

He went to work as usual next week, and came home promptly at night; mother and children were surprised, but too glad to have him at home to ask for any explanation. He worked all week to the tune of "four pounds of steak and cut it pretty thick," and the ring of the money on the counter; he even smiled over his work; his companions joked him and wanted him to come with them at night, as usual, but he only said, "No!"

He was very excited all day Saturday, and could hardly wait for 6 o'clock; it came finally; he received his wages and started—for the saloon, do you think? No, indeed! He went straight to that beef market, walked in, threw down a dollar, and exclaimed; "Give me four pounds of steak, and cut it pretty thick!"

The butcher stared at him, and Bill was obliged to repeat his order. The butcher was a wise man, and said: "Hurrah for you, Bill!" Bill did not seem to notice what was said, for he was in a hurry to get home.

Wife and children were surprised again; father coming home with their supper and throwing money into mother's lap was something new. He explained matters this time by telling what had happened the Saturday night before at the meat market.

"Now, Mary," said he, "I have turned over a new leaf, and it will stay turned over. I see how I have wasted my money, and you all have suffered for it. Let us have some supper, and then we will take what money is left, go out and get some clothes for the children, and start them to Sunday school in the morning, as you and I were raised to do."

Not one of the family ever forgot that "four pounds of steak, and cut it pretty thick" that had so completely changed life for all.—*Kind Words.*

selling in localities, and that Provincial Legislatures have no authority to interfere with the manufacture or importation of liquor. The question of whether or not Provincial Legislatures may entirely prohibit the sale of liquor within their respective territories is not yet definitely settled.

#### EXISTING LEGISLATION.

Under its prohibitory power the Dominion Parliament has enacted a local option law, known as the Canada Temperance Act, for counties and cities. Dominion legislation also prohibits liquor-selling in unorganized territories, except under special permits, also all sale on parliamentary election days and any sale to Indians.

Under their respective powers above mentioned the legislatures of every part of Canada have enacted license laws full of limiting provisions; and, in every province but one, have given to electors extensive local option power to prohibit the retail sale of liquor. It is understood that any authority exercised under provincial legislation takes effect only in localities in which the electors have not availed themselves of the prohibition authorized by the Canada Temperance Act.

In most of the Provinces no licenses are granted except on petition of a majority of the electors within a certain area. Nova Scotia requires a petition signed by two-thirds of the electors, and the petition must be renewed every year. Manitoba requires a petition for a new license to be signed by sixteen out of the nearest twenty householders, and provides that eight of the nearest twenty may prevent by petition the renewal of an existing license. British Columbia requires, outside cities, for a new license, a petition from two-thirds of resident lot owners and householders, and two-thirds of the wives of such lot owners and householders.

Nearly all the provinces have legislation authorizing relatives to prohibit by notice, the sale of liquor to habitual drunkards, minors, lunatics, or other persons in whom the notifiers are interested, and imposing severe penalties for sale after such notice. Most of the provinces have also civil damage laws, and, some provinces authorize the commitment of habitual drunkards to special asylums.

#### LOCAL PROHIBITION.

Through the operation of the legislation mentioned there are extensive areas under prohibition in every part of the Dominion. In Nova Scotia licenses are granted in only two out of eighteen counties. Prince Edward Island has no licenses outside the city of Charlottetown. Nine out of fourteen counties in New Brunswick have total prohibition. Outside the large cities, Quebec has 603 municipalities without licenses, out of a total of 933. The greater part of Manitoba is under prohibition. In Ontario there is a steady reduction in the number of licenses issued. In 1874 the number was 6,185, now it is less than 3,000. The city of Toronto with a population of 60,000, had then 530 licenses. Now, with a population of 200,000, it has only 209.

#### HOURS OF CLOSING.

The regular hours of closing licensed places, as fixed by provincial laws, are, in Nova Scotia 8 p.m., in New Brunswick 10 p.m., and in Manitoba 11 p.m. In Quebec hours of closing may be fixed by municipal councils. In the Province of Ontario the time for closing may be fixed by local license commissioners, but must not be later than 11 p.m.

All licensed places are also closed in Nova Scotia from six o'clock on Saturday night until seven o'clock on Monday morning, in New Brunswick from seven Saturday night till six on Monday morning, in Manitoba from half-past eight on Saturday night till seven on Monday morning, and in British Columbia from eleven on Saturday night till one o'clock on Monday morning. Some provinces, however, permit sale on Sundays in hotels to bona fide guests at meals.

#### LIQUOR CONSUMPTION.

Careful calculations show that the aggregate consumption of liquors in the Dominion of Canada annually amounts to about four million gallons of spirits and eighteen million gallons of wine and beer, making an annual consumption of a little less than four and one-half gallons per head of the population. This is about equal to one-fourth the per capita consumption of the United States, or one-seventh the per capita consumption of Great Britain. The annual expenditure for intoxicating liquor by the consumers is estimated at about forty million dollars.

## The Liquor Laws of Canada.

The Dominion of Canada is a union of a number of what were once separate colonies, each of which still retains for local purposes its territorial and political identity. Dominion affairs are controlled by a Parliament composed of an appointed Senate and an elected House of Commons, and a Governor General. It includes the Provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, British Columbia and a large area known as the Northwest Territories, each of which eight divisions has a Legislature and a Lieutenant-Governor, exercising jurisdiction in matters and interests with which these bodies are authorized to deal. Outside the large territory which these legislatures control, is an extensive area in which the Dominion alone has jurisdiction. The population of the Dominion of Canada is over five millions.

#### THE QUESTION OF JURISDICTION.

The Act of the British Parliament which constitutes the Dominion has not made perfectly clear the respective jurisdictions of the Dominion Parliament and Provincial Legislatures in relation to the liquor traffic. Through decisions of Courts, the question is being gradually settled. So far it has been affirmed that the Dominion Parliament has power to prohibit the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating liquor; that Provincial Legislatures have power to impose license fees and restrictions, and prohibit retail liquor