

## An October Ride.

BY CHARLES H. GRANDALL.

On, swiftly forward flashed the train,  
And rich the autumn foliage came,  
Until it seemed that past the pane  
October flew on wings of flame!

It was a joy to watch the gleam  
Of tender sky and tinted leaf;  
The wind scarce stirred the placid stream—  
It was a day for sweet belief.

The woodbine, like a lover, wound  
The blushing oak with rosy arms;  
The red leaves fluttering o'er the ground,  
Like couriers, spread the Frost's alarms.

And then there came some faces fair,  
Some old time friends that well we know—  
The sumachs nodding debonair,  
In schoolgirl hoods of ruddy hue.

The mellow fields of green and gray  
Told of the harvests they had borne;  
Like golden bombs the pumpkins lay  
Amid the tasseled tents of corn.

It was the time when chestnuts fall  
And early morning frosts the grass,  
When urehins in the orchards call  
And mock the crows that southward pass.

I mused upon the season's flight  
From northern pines to southern seas,  
Leaving a path of colour bright  
With gold and scarlet harmonies.

Then Nature like a woman seemed;  
Whose work was done, and now was dressed  
In richest robes, and sat and dreamed  
O'er maiden fancies long at rest.

And next the landscape seemed to tell  
A tale of life—of mellow age,  
Of the rich fruit of doing well,  
And its eternal heritage.

Ah! could my Autumn be a scene  
As fair as smiles beneath that sun,  
With memories crowding fast between  
Of kindnesses received and done,

Then would I watch the glimmering pane  
Nor wish Earth's fields to further roam,  
\*Nor ask old Time to stop his train  
That daily brought me nearer home.

## A Hero of Duty.

In the north of Holland, over an extent of three leagues, the country is not protected from the incursions of the sea by any natural barrier. Some two hundred years ago the Dutch undertook the gigantic task of erecting enormous dykes of granite blocks and clay to resist the force of their terrible invader.

Behind this shelter numerous villages arose, which flourish to the present day. Alkmond, in particular, which numbers ten thousand inhabitants, is built a little below the dyke, which is kept in constant repair by two hundred workmen, under the direction of an engineer.

One afternoon in November, about a century ago, a furious wind was blowing from the north-west, increasing every moment. The engineer in charge was a young man, engaged to be married, whose friends and family lived in Amsterdam. He was to go to Amsterdam that very evening, to join in a great festival—long looked forward to and eagerly desired. His preparations were all made, and he was in high spirits, just ready to set out. Suddenly the sound of the rising wind struck upon his ear, and he remembered—with a pang of anxiety—that it was the time of the high tides. He thought of his dyke, and all that depended on it. It would be a dreadful disappointment not to go. But the dyke! His friends would be all expecting him—watching for him. What would they think? But the dyke! There was a fierce conflict between inclination and duty.

It is six o'clock. The sea is rising. But at seven he must set out for Amsterdam. Shall he go? His heart says, Yes; duty says, No. Again he looks at the sea, watches the rising storm, and decides to remain at his post.

He then runs to the dyke. It is a scene of the utmost confusion. His two hundred men are aghast—bewildered. The storm has become a hurricane. The supply of tow and mortar is exhausted. They are at their wits' end to know how to repair the breaches—how to defend the place against the terrible enemy who is every moment gaining upon them. But as soon as the young engineer appears, a joyous cry bursts from every breast, "Here is the master! God be praised! Now all will be well."

The master places each workman at his post, and a desperate battle begins between man and the furious ocean. About half-past eleven there is a cry from the centre—

"Help! help!"

"What is the matter?"

"Four stones carried away at a blow!"

"Where is that?"

"Here, to the left."

The master does not lose a moment. He fastens a rope around his body; four workmen do the same; and forty arms seize the ropes, while the five brave fellows throw themselves into the waves to repair the damage. The mad waves struggle with them—dash them about—blind them. No matter; they do their duty, and then they are hauled on land again.

But the cry, "Help! help!" soon rises from all parts.

"Stones!" cries one.

"There are no more."

"Mortar!"

"There is no more."

"Take off your clothes!" cries the master, tearing off his own. "Stop the holes with them!"

What will men not do for a noble leader in a great cause? Cheerfully, without a murmur, straining every nerve, the gallant two hundred toil on, half naked, exposed to all the fury of a November tempest.

It wants a quarter to midnight. A few inches more and the sea will have burst over the dyke, and spread furiously over the defenceless country. To-morrow there will not be a living soul in all these flourishing villages. The clothes are all used up, but the danger increases. The tide will rise till midnight.

"Now, my men," cried the clear, thrilling voice of the master, "we can do nothing more. On your knees, all of you, and let us each cry mightily to God for help."

And there, in the midnight darkness, on the dyke, which shook and trembled beneath the fury of the tempest, the brave two hundred knelt, lifting their hands and their hearts to him who can say to the winds and the waves, "Peace; be still!" And as upon the Sea of Galilee, so now he heard his children's cry, and delivered them in their distress.

Meanwhile the people of Alkmond ate and drank, sang and danced, little thinking that there were but a few inches of mason-work between them and death!

Thousands of lives had been saved because one man had done his duty.—*British Messenger.*

A THREE-YEAR-OLD girl, passing through the market, picked up a green popper, and tried to eat it. She put it down hurriedly, after taking one bite, and the market-man said, "What's the matter with the fruit?" "Zero was a bum-bee in it," answered the girl, between her sobs.

## A Boy's Promise.

The school was out, and down the street  
A noisy crowd came thronging;  
The hue of health, and gladness sweet,  
To every face belonging.

Among them strode a little lad,  
Who listened to another,  
And mildly said, half grave, half sad,  
"I can't—I promised mother."

A shout went up, a ringing shout  
Of boisterous decision,  
But not one moment left in doubt  
That manly, brave decision.

"Go where you please, do what you will,"  
He calmly told the other;  
"But I shall keep my word, boys, still,  
I can't—I promised mother."

Ah! who could doubt the future course  
Of one who thus had spoken?  
Through manhood's struggle, gain, and loss,  
Could faith like this be broken?

God's blessing on that steadfast will,  
Unyielding to another,  
That bears all jeers and laughter still,  
Because he promised mother.

## De-Legalize the Traffic, and Save the Boys.

The Scott Act kills the treating system. Degraded men, who have acquired the drinking habit, may manage to get liquor in disreputable dives and dens, even where this law is in operation, but the boys are not tempted by the seductiveness of the open bar, and the terrible traffic is robbed of its potent attractions of joviality, warmth, good-fellowship, sparkle, light, and fun.

This fact was well brought out in reference to Maine, some time ago, by Mr. D. R. Locke, who visited the State named to inquire into the working of prohibition.

## A STRONG ARGUMENT.

He said—The best argument I found in Maine for prohibition was by an editor of a paper in Portland, who was—for political reasons—mildly opposed to it. I had a conversation with him, which ran something like this:—

"Where were you born?"

"In a village about sixty miles from Bangor."

"Do you remember the condition of things prior to prohibition?"

"Distinctly. There was a vast amount of drunkenness, and consequent disorder and poverty."

"What was the effect of prohibition?"

"It shut up all the rum-shops, and practically banished liquor from the village. It became one of the most quiet and prosperous places on the globe."

"How long did you live in the village after prohibition?"

"Eleven years; or until I was twenty-one years of age."

"Then?"

"Then I went to Bangor."

"Do you drink now?"

"I never tasted a drop of liquor in my life."

"Why?"

"Up to the age of twenty-one I never saw it; and after that I did not care to take on the habit."

## THEY WANT THE BOYS:

That is all there is in it. If the boys of the country are not exposed to the infernalism, the men are very sure not to be. This man and his school-mates were saved from rum by the fact that they could not get it until they were old enough to know better. Few men are drunkards who know not the poison till after they are twenty-one. It is the youth that the whiskey and beer men want.