

Dandelions.

At the skies' wide gates Earth waited,
Famished and cold,
With eager, outstretched palms,
To catch the Sun's bright alms
Of scattered gold.

And the Sun went to his coffers,
As a king in pride,
And out of his hoards of gold
All that his hands could hold
Broadcast he threw;

Throw yellow golden guineas,
A fan of them,
Over her pale green gown,
Showing thickly down
From throat to hem

And, oh, how the little children
Laughed out to see
That with thoughtful mien
Of dandelions the grass
So bright could be!

I saw them this morning going
Their ways to school,
And of this coin of the Sun
Had every happy one
Both his hoards full.

such a position as has been decided, we should wish to know something more than the size of his breech and the tenacity of his grip on a given piece of work. We should want to know about the strength of his love for that father and mother who have sacrificed so much for his advancement. We should look for some indication of a life-binding him to the house of God as a regular, thoughtful attendant. We should inquire as to the connecting links in his life between his daily conduct and the Word of God. Has he come into an earnest, loyal relation to Jesus Christ as his Saviour and master? Is he "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might?"

Yes, there is a great demand for strong boys. Satan wants them, that he may rob them of their prospective vigour. Christ wants them, that through their youthful robustness the weak places in his army may be reinforced.

The Church of today, as well as commercial corporations, may well hang out the sign, in unmistakable characters, and keep it displayed, "Wanted—strong boys."
—Golden Rule.

THE TOBACCO HABIT AND ITS EFFECTS UPON SCHOOL WORK.

BY H. H. SEERLEY.

AFTER making a study of several hundred boys, running through a period of ten years, I give only observed facts, and do not assume the conditions nor jump at fore-ordained conclusions.

1. Boys that begin a habit at an early age are stunted physically, and never arrive at normal bodily development.

2. Accompanied with the use of the narcotic were certain disordered physical functions, such as indigestion, impaired taste, defective eyesight, dull hearing, nervous affections and diseases of the heart. I have not found a single case of early addicting to the habit of tobacco-using that did not suffer with one or more of these direful abnormal conditions.

3. Tobacco, used in any form, destroyed the ability to apply one's self to study, and prevented his comprehending or remembering his lessons. The mental faculties of a boy under the influence of the narcotic seem to be in a stupor, and since depraved nerve power stultifies and weakens the will power, there is but little use for the teacher to seek to arouse the dormant, paralyzed energies, or to interest and foster the lagged desire. I have not met a pupil that is addicted to the habit who will go through a single day's work and have good lessons. I have never had one whose scholarship record was good, and in almost every case the deportment was below the average standard. At the regular examination for promotion, nearly every one of the tobacco-using pupils fail in doing the most reasonable test work, even if this is not the first time the work has been passed over in the class. I have had numbers of cases in which they have remained in the same grade for four successive years, and then they were not ready to be advanced into the next higher class.

Actual cases.—1. A high-school boy who had always done excellent work, was reported one term as not getting his lessons. I had a talk with the boy and stated the facts, assuring him that with his past record his poor work was unexplainable, as he insisted that he devoted his time faithfully to his studies. He denied using tobacco at all. His work failed from month to month, and before the year closed his parents withdrew him from school. His father deeply regretted the failure, admitted that a change had come in the boy's conduct at home, but as he had heretofore been truthful and faithful, he could not think that the presupposed cause was the true one. In a few months the habit, thus far secret, became more pronounced and more public, and it was absolutely established by the boy's own admissions, that it was begun several months before the trouble noticed at school, and that no one knew it save the salesman that furnished him the supply of the narcotic.

2. Four years ago a boy entered one of my primary schools as a chart pupil. Before the boy was four years of age he had learned the habit of smoking cigarettes and

stubs of cigars. His father taught him the use of narcotics, and considered it sport to see his son exhibit the habit and tastes of his elders. During the four years he did not complete the twenty-four lessons on the chart, although he attended regularly, and applied himself as diligently as the average pupil of that grade. He seemed perfectly unable to learn like other children, though he was at the beginning a precocious, promising child. His mental activity was so dulled and paralyzed as to render him but little better than an idiot or an imbecile. Experience has shown that the younger the habit is acquired the more disastrous the results to the mentality of the child.

3. One boy was a successful primary pupil. His work and his interest were constantly praised by his teachers. On his entering the last half of the third grade, his work began to lag and his interest to decline. At the examination for promotion his case was conditioned, and it was detected that he had begun some months before to use tobacco. His parents were informed, and strenuous efforts were made by his teacher to get the habit restrained and corrected. His reform was not secured, and though he remained five years in the same grade, he never was able to advance on merit, and several trial promotions proved failures.

4. In a case where reform was secured and the habit overcome, the pupil again returned to normal progress, and had a successful career as a student.

Other observations.—So far as my observations have extended, not a single boy has passed the examination required for admission to the high school after he had acquired the habit, and not one has graduated from the high school who began the habit after beginning his course in the high school.

But the moral results are also as serious. Pupils under the influence of the weed are constant subjects of discipline, are not truthful, practise deception and cannot be depended upon. A change in character in a formerly good boy is a very strong indication that some habit is getting hold upon him whose tyranny must be broken before he will again be clothed in his right mind. The worst characteristic of the habit is a loss of personal self respect, and of personal regard for the customs and wishes of ladies and gentlemen, especially when among strangers.

If these observations mean anything, they declare something ought to be done to save child-life from the pitfalls that commercial interests are digging, and that greed is encouraging; that more should be done than to instruct by oral or text lessons in school; that teachers, parents and philanthropists are not yet sufficiently aroused regarding the magnitude of the evil of tobacco using by children; that in the crusade against alcohol we should recognize that other evils, though more quietly, are just as surely sapping the strength and destroying the vigour of the youth of this generation.

WORKERS.

If you expect God to choose you for a great work, be busy; he seldom selects idlers. When he wished a deliverer for Israel, he went into the wilderness for Moses, who was watching sheep; when he wanted a man to save his people from the Midianites, he sent for Gideon, who was threshing wheat; when he wanted a man after his own heart to be king of Israel, he sent for David, who was keeping sheep. Idlers do not suit; the Lord wishes those who are not only willing to work, but who are hard at it. Idlers are too often lazy, and that may be the cause of their idleness. Such seldom have enough ambition to take care of themselves, let alone caring for the Lord's work. But idlers suit Satan exactly. He likes such as have no ambition, for they make the best slaves, and he wants slaves for his work. But God wants something better. He wishes boys and girls who have ambition, who take an interest in their work; he wishes servants who are anxious to rise, for he means to promote them some day. From servants, he adopts them into his family and makes them his children.—Forward.

WORSE THAN THE INDIANS

Rest brings desolation to the home. It fires the heart of the victim with a thirst for blood, and often that thirst is directed against the infuriated man's best and most devoted friend. The saloon is under the law, and the creature of the law, and the man who is appointed to conduct it is worse than an Apache armed with a tomahawk. Were a few thousand Apaches turned loose to massacre our women we would soon shoot them down and be rid of the foe, but the saloon-keeper is a perpetual Apache, and we know not what hour he will brain our friends by his own red hand or by assassins appointed by him. By his emissaries he may murder 1,500 helpless women in our land in a year, and no hair of his head will suffer loss by the act. There is no exaggeration in our words; there can be none in speech directed against the saloon. From January 1, 1889, to April 1, 1891, 3,004 wives were murdered by their drunken husbands in the United States. What if the Apaches had done this work or the tenth part of it? The nation would have been aghast at the horror, and would have voted the extermination of the tribe. There are more dangerous men in the nation than red-handed, tomahawk-flourishing Apaches—they are legalized saloonists.—Herald of Gospel Liberty.

ROBERT MOFFAT.

ONE day a Scotch lad, not yet sixteen, started from home to take charge of a gentleman's garden, in Cheshire, England. He bade farewell to father, brothers, and sisters; but his mother accompanied him to the boat on which he was to cross the Firth of Forth.

"Now, my Robert," she said, as they came in sight of the ferry, "let us stand here a few minutes. I wish to ask one favour of you before we part."

"What is it, mother?" asked the son.

"Promise me that you will do what I am going to ask you."

"I cannot, mother," replied the cautious boy, "till you tell me what your wish is."

"Oh, Robert!" she exclaimed, and the tears ran down her cheeks, "would I ask you to do anything that is not right?"

"Ask what you will, mother, and I will do it," said the son, overcome by his mother's agitation.

"I want you to promise me that you will read a chapter in the Bible every morning and evening."

"Mother, you know I read my Bible."

"I know you do, but you do not read it regularly. I shall return home now with a happy heart, seeing you have promised me to read the scriptures daily."

The lad went his way. He kept his promise, and every day read his Bible. He read, however, because he loved his mother—not from any pleasure he found in the sacred book. At length, inattentive though he was, the truths he daily came in contact with aroused his conscience. He became uneasy—then unhappy. He would have ceased reading but for his promise.

Living alone in a lodge in a large garden, his leisure was his own. He had but few books, and those were works on gardening and botany, which his profession obliged him to consult. He did not pray until his unhappiness sent him on his knees. One evening, while poring over the Epistle to the Romans, light broke into his soul. The apostle's words appeared different; though familiar to him.

"Can it be possible," he said to himself, "that I have never understood what I have read again and again?"

Peace came to his mind, and he found himself earnestly desiring to know and to do the will of God. That will was made known to him in a simple way. One night, as he entered a neighbouring town, he read a placard announcing that a missionary meeting was to be held. The time appointed for the meeting had long passed, but the lad stood and read the placard over and over. Stories of missionaries told him by his mother came up as vividly as if they had just been related. Then and there was begotten the purpose which made Robert Moffat a missionary to the Hottentots of South Africa.—Exchange.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, MAY 14, 1892.

WANTED—A STRONG BOY.

So read a sign in a store window, as we passed by the other morning. At noon it was gone. The placard, however, had done more than to accomplish its desired object. It set us to thinking. "Wanted a strong boy!" in how many places that legend might be truthfully displayed!

The world wants boys that are strong, first of all, in the body. A stomach fed chiefly on cake and peanuts, and a system undermined by the deadly cigarette, make a poor basis for stout, fleet limbs and sturdy arms. Other things being equal, a merchant or lawyer wants a boy who can pull a strong car, make his home run over the ball-field, and keep his wind in a half-mile run.

Other things being equal—what other things? Certain ones, that are the real measures of strength, whether in boys or men. Has he grit? Can he stick to a thing? Is he quick to take in a situation, ready in an emergency, bright-witted where others blunder? Is he equal to responsibility? Can he be left with a given task with a certainty that he can be literally "left to himself with it, and his employer and it fully done in due season without a second of intervening anxiety or oversight? These are some of the elements of strength that make up the model "strong boy" who is universally wanted to-day.

But is this all? We think not. If we were gauging the real power of a boy for