

maker; he had made a shrewd one with Ludwig Estermann, regarding the house which the latter occupied. Adam had sold, and Ludwig had bought it, on the agreement that the price was to be paid in annual instalments of fifty thalers each, to be duly deposited in Finkler's hand, on or before the feast of St. Martin; and if the purchaser failed to pay any one of these instalments within the stipulated time, the house should revert to its original owner, without any allowance for the payments formerly made, or the expense incurred by repairs or improvements. It was an unsafe contract for Estermann, but the house was cheap on the whole. It suited his necessities and had taken his fancy; his trade was good, fifty thalers could be easily saved in the course of a year, and old Finkler would sell on no other terms.

It was said that he had become the proprietor of many a village home by similar agreements; but prudent men will do imprudent things at times. Unwarned by that report, Ludwig accepted the conditions, and made the house his home.

Almost seven years had passed away since then. The greater part of the purchase-money was paid; the bare, scarcely finished building, of which Ludwig took possession, had become a pleasant dwelling-place as could be found in all the mountain country. Snug and warm in winter, fair and flowery in the summer time, passing strangers paused to admire its outward aspect, in such remarkable contrast to the rest of the village homes, and neighbors knew how bright and cheerful it was made within by Margaret Estermann.

Margaret spent a useful and contented life, though it was not expected to flow always in the same channel. Ernest Muller had been her father's apprentice ever since the Estermanns took possession of the purchased house. He was a neighbor's son, the eldest of a large family, and the help and hope of his parents.

Between him and Ludwig's daughter a mutual attachment had existed from their childhood, which increased with their years till the young people seemed to have but one heart and one mind. It was cordially approved of by the parents on both sides, especially Margaret's father, whose earthly hopes and aims were centred in the well-being of his only child.

"It will be a good dowry for my girl," he would say to himself when contemplating, with honest pride, the home which his own industrious hands and well-earned thalers had made of the purchased house; "she and Ernest Muller shall live here, with the Lord's blessing, a happy wedded life, and bring up their children to play about the arm-chair where I sit Grandfather Greybeard."

The best-founded hopes and most promising plans of men are doomed to disappointment at times, and so it was with the honest blacksmith in those days of our tale. Ludwig's hand did not lose its cunning in the forging of iron, but his trade fell rapidly away, the non-keeping of saints' days did it as much damage as their observance had done to village affairs in general. Ludwig's unpopularity was at its height, when a blacksmith from the neighborhood of Innsbruck, partly in hopes of finding a better field, arrived and established himself in Grunderwald.

His first act was to publish a verbal manifesto in favor of the saints' days, in one of which he declared no money would induce him to lift a hammer, and that orthodox profession gave the finishing blow to Estermann's business.

Henceforth his forge was forsaken, while customers flocked to that of the new-comer, who was by no means so good a workman, and rather patronized on account of the saints, than employed for his skill. The most friendly of the neighbors advised Ludwig to recover his position among them by at once conforming to the established custom but his manly spirit spurned the thought of giving up declared convictions for the sake of trade and gain. He remained in his empty forge, framing curious specimens of iron-work, or teaching Ernest the most hidden secrets of his craft, as the youth's apprentice-time was now drawing near its end. So was the specified time approaching for paying the last instalment of Ludwig's debt to Adam Finkler; but with all his exertions and savings too, the blacksmith could not scrape together half the sum.

(To be Continued.)



Temperance Department.

JOE'S PARTNER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BABES IN THE BASKET," &C.

(National Temperance Society, New York.)

CHAPTER IV.—A RESOLUTION.

There was no more sleep for Ben White that night. He had entered that poor home in a merry mood, excited and exhilarated by battling with the storm. Full of health and prosperity, he had thought it a fine joke to rough it a little, and have a good story to tell about in the future. Ben called himself a Christian boy. He had never thought it possible he could be anything but a member of the church and a right-principled man. Now the awful reality of the truth of God came home to him with power. How would his life look when pictured before him at the last day? The hand of his Lord he had before taken as a right and natural thing; now, with new love, he grasped again that outstretched hand, and felt that only so could he be safe from destruction, and pass through this world of temptation to the rest above.

In Kate's prayer for her husband Ben had heartily joined. How he realized the power of that habit against which Harry Barber had so long struggled in vain!

Then and there Ben White made a resolution: Not a drop of anything intoxicating should ever again pass his lips. Wine he had occasionally taken at his father's table with older Christian friends. Henceforward he would not touch it, lest some one possessed of the demon should say: "It was with you I first learned to drink, and now I can not get free." How did he know that he was himself secure from temptation? There was but one absolutely safe path. He would have nothing to do with that which at the last could burn like a fire and sting like an adder.

Ben grew impatient for the morning light. There was work for him to do. He longed to be up and at it. This vacation, which Ben had meant to idle away, must be a busy time for him. Who could tell whether he should live till school began again, and what had he done for the Kingdom of his Redeemer? What had he done for his fellow-creatures, if he should suddenly be called to his account? What could he say of his stewardship? Fourteen years of health of body and mind in a Christian land, a luxurious home, and a full purse. What had he rendered to God for all his blessings?

Ben had had no mother to prompt him to a spiritual, Christian life, or to deeds of mercy and love. His father had been satisfied to know that Ben was what he called a "correct boy," a good scholar, and a merry, happy fellow, whom everybody loved.

His father was now away from home on a long journey, and Ben was quite the master of the house, as he was an only child, so he had not hesitated to spend the night as he could, to escape further buffeting of the storm.

As soon as it was light, Ben opened the outer door, and, fishing-rod in hand, he went out silently.

How delicious he found the fresh morning air! The three-mile walk was a mere pastime!

What a breakfast he made, and how he did wish "the giant" were beside him to enjoy the good-cheer with him!

Ben had not finished his comfortable meal, when the old housekeeper stepped into the room.

He had been ashamed to find that she had sat up all night for him. He had not once thought that any one could take any trouble about him. He felt himself so completely the master in his father's absence, he did not realize that to the old servants he was but a child, and a child left in their charge.

"Your father is at the door," said the housekeeper soberly; "shall I tell him about your not coming home last night?"

"I'll tell him myself. I am sorry, though, I gave you so much bother," said Ben, as he bounded to the door, to welcome his father home.

Mr. White was a quiet, reserved man, and

Ben had never been very confidential with him. Now, however, the boy's heart was so full, that as soon as they were seated at table, he poured out the story of his last night's adventures.

Mr. White ate silently, but evidently listening with interest; as Ben described the tall, thin woman, the courageous "giant" and the empty larder, he looked into his father's cold, light-blue eyes. Could it be that they were full of tears?

Mr. White said nothing, took another muffin quietly, the eyes grew clearer, and Ben thought he must have been mistaken.

Ben found no difficulty in telling his story, until he came to the point where his own feelings had been so deeply roused; this he passed over shortly, simply saying:

"I never realized before what a miserable, useless life I have led. I trust I shall be forgiven, and helped to do better. But, father," he continued, "one thing I have resolved, that I will never drink a glass of wine again. It is not that I think my influence will be worth much, but I want that very little to be on the right side. And then, father, I might go wrong myself, who knows? Some of the boys no older than I am take too much for them. So you won't mind, father, if my glass stands empty?"

"No, child!" said Mr. White soberly; "no, child, but you shall never be tempted to break your resolution at my table, nor shall my example be in your way. At home, and everywhere, my glass shall stand empty too, from this day henceforward."

To Ben's surprise, his father rose hastily, kissed his forehead, and with a "God bless you, my boy," quitted the room.

In the boy's young face, touched with deep feeling, Mr. White had seen again the earnest, appealing expression of the wife, who had once softened his calm, cold nature, and prompted him to many a loving deed. She had been received "up higher," while her husband was left, in his speechless grief, shut out by his reserve, as by a strong wall, from human sympathy, and had little by little grown almost forgetful of that Divine love which can alone cheer and sustain. His Christian life had grown dull and formal: it was paralyzed, not dead.

Ben sat alone, in silent gratitude. He had but thought to make to his heavenly Father the poor offering of the influence of a penitent boy, and now he had the promise of his earthly father's sanction and help for the cause that was already dear to his heart.

(To be continued.)

THE BOY WHO COULD SAY "NO."

"No!" Clear, sharp and ringing, with an emphasis that could not fail to arrest attention.

"I don't often hear such a negative as that," remarked one gentleman to another as they were passing the playground of the village school.

"It is not often any one hears it. The boy who uttered it can say 'yes,' too, quite as emphatically. He is a new comer here, an orphan, who lives with his uncle about two miles off. He walks in every morning, bringing his lunch, and walks back at night. He works enough, too, to pay his board, and does more toward running his uncle's farm than the old man does himself. He is the coarsest dressed scholar in school and the greatest favorite. Everybody knows just what to expect of him."

"Quite a character. I should like to see him. Boys of such sturdy make-up are getting to be scarce, while the world never had more need of them than now."

"All that is true, and if you wish to see Ned, come this way."

They moved on a few steps, pausing at an open gate, near which a group of lads were discussing an exciting question.

"It isn't right, and I won't have anything to do with it. When I say 'no,' I mean it."

"Well, any way, you needn't speak so loud and tell everybody about it," was responded impatiently to this declaration.

"I'm willing everybody should hear what I've got to say about it. I won't take anything that don't belong to me, and I won't drink cider any way."

"Such a fuss about a little fun! It's just what we might have expected. You never go in for fun."

"I never go in for doing wrong. I told you 'no,' to begin with. And you're the ones to blame if there's been any fuss."

"Ned Dunlap, I should like to see you a minute."

"Yes, sir." And the boy removed his

hat as he passed through the gate and waited to hear what Mr. Palmer might say to him.

"Has your uncle any apples to sell?"

"No, sir. He has some, but he has sold them. I've got two bushels that were my share for picking. Should you like to buy them, sir?"

"Yes, if we can agree upon the price. Do you know just how much they are worth?"

"Yes, sir."

"All right then. I will call for them, and you may call at my house for the pay."

This short interview afforded the stranger an opportunity to observe Ned Dunlap closely. The next day a call was made at his uncle's, and although years elapsed before he knew what a friend he had gained, that day his fortune was assured. After he had grown to manhood and accepted a lucrative position, which was not of his seeking, he asked why it had been offered him.

"Because I knew you could say 'no' if occasion required," answered his employer.

"No," was the first word I heard you speak, and you spoke it with a will. More people, old and young, are ruined for want of using that word than from any other cause. They don't wish to do wrong, but they hesitate and parley until the tempter has them fast. The boy or girl who is not afraid to say 'no' is reasonably certain of making an honorable man or woman."

"Yes" is a sweet and often loving word. "No" is a strong, brave word, which has signalled the defeat of many a scheme for the ruin of some fair young life.—*Temperance Banner.*

THE OPIUM VICTIM.

From Nankin Mrs. Adams writes:—A few weeks ago messengers came to our house asking that the foreign teacher would go and see a woman who was dying from opium poisoning. Mr. Adams and Mr. Tomalin took some medicine, and, after walking some distance, they reached a fine large house, evidently the residence of a person of some distinction. They were shown into a room filled with people talking, smoking, and drinking tea, and speculating upon the result of the foreigner's visit. The poor woman was in a death-like stupor, and, roused, complained of great pain at the heart and a weary desire for sleep. My husband gave her a strong emetic, which soon produced the desired effect. While watching the result of the treatment, the following story was told:—The husband of this poor woman had formerly held a lucrative and responsible position in a Mandarin Yamen, or court. While there he first tasted what the natives called "Western dirt." As long as he kept his situation his wife and family did not suffer, but he lost it as the opium obtained more complete mastery over him. He could get no other employment, though the taste grew daily. His poor wife did all she could to keep up appearance and provide food for her family by winding silk and weaving the satin for which Nankin is noted; portions of their house were left off till they had but one small room left to themselves. At last the bitterly cold winter set in, and the poor creature found herself without money, without food, without clothes, for those which should have protected them from the cold had long since been sold to buy the fatal drug, and yet the infatuated husband must have money to satisfy the cravings of appetite. At last the poor wife, in a fit of desperation, determined to put an end to the struggle by taking her life; and thus, ignorant of God, ignorant of the future, she was very near the unseen world, when it pleased God to restore her, as the remedies used were blessed to her recovery. The husband came afterward to hear the Gospel preached, and seemed very grateful. This is but a picture of what is occurring in thousands of families in this city, and in myriads of families in this empire.—*Word and Work.*

THAT WAS A stinging rebuke which a tobacco-chewing father received, when he heard that his young son had been begging licorice from the apothecary, and when asked why he wished to chew it, replied, "So I can spit black, like papa."

MRS. DURRANT, Secretary of the Working Women's Teetotal League, having completed 40 years of teetotalism, and her husband 36, they invited abstainers of 35 years' standing to tea at Mr. Varley's Tabernacle, Notting-hill. Nearly three hundred persons accepted the invitation, and the pleasant meeting was presided over by the Rev. Dawson Burns.