

WHERE IS MY BOY?

Part of an essay read at the Temperance Conference of Scipio Quarterly meeting, 9th mo., 25, 1887, by Amelia G. Searing.

Attending a crowded assembly with my 8-year-old boy, I found that many times the restless little fellow had slipped away unnoticed, and as I went about questioning one and another, I thought how many mothers throughout our land are asking, "Where is my boy," and meeting with a bitter response. During his earliest years the boy is constantly in her thoughts lest he come to some bodily harm. Then as he learns to care for himself, the mother's watchfulness relaxes and before she realizes the separation he is living in a little world of his own beyond her kiss. As he outgrows the amusements of childhood, what has taken their place. Is he, with his schoolmates and companions, reckless and mischievous, delighting in an uproar and a terror to quiet-loving neighbors, fond of prowling about and disturbing the peace that falls with the shades of night. Is she obliged to seek a sleepless pillow and oft times wet it with her tears as she exclaims "Where is my boy?" Or worse yet, he may have gone beyond the bounds of thoughtless fun, and though yet in his teens have lost his liberty and become the slave of the intoxicating cup. Then who can paint the anguish of the mother's heart, the dread horror in which she lives by day, the visions of danger, crime and death that visit her pillow by night! What thoughts of his happy days of childhood, of the time when he followed her about with eager questionings and besought her interest in his play or his picture book.

Did she put him aside with a hasty word as her mind was engrossed with her daily tasks? How gladly now would she return to those early days, when she could bid him climb to her knee and win his confidence and listen to his plans.

Her own pursuits that seemed so

important, how freely would she have them now to help him with some impossible boat or wagon; anything would she do could she keep him by her side pure as in those early days. But what can she do to regain an influence over him? Can she follow him into the saloons that open their attractive doors on every side? They are open to the thoughtless boy, but what he finds there his mother can only guess by the tainted breath, the reckless bearing, the careless and profane language that he learns, and the wreathed cigar that once ignited and applied to his lips will burn on until it gnaws at his very vitals.

Young people love variety and amusement. Their overflowing spirits may be directed into harmless channels, but temptations are on every side and habits are formed by the thoughtless boy that may enslave the man with chains he will never have strength to break. Even as I write comes the story of a neighbor, an aged mother. All day she had been saying, "to-night I shall have news of Mike." Did some mysterious premonition arouse the mother's anxiety; never long asleep, leading her to ask "where is my boy?" Ere night came the swift-winged message of death: "Drowned; in his pocket two bottles of whiskey."

EDUCATION.

An article in the REVIEW for 12th month on "Higher Education" has arrested my attention. Much is said on this subject, and in these later days of higher education, it is a grand thing to have a rounded education, but I hold it a greater thing to know how to apply and use it when one has had this great favor.

How many fond parents there are who have toiled early and late that their children might have an education, sent them to college, and their return in many cases, with all the honor granted them to fill no higher places