

The Four Big Brooms.

BY MARY BAILING STREET.

"Oh, mother, why does the big wind blow,
And rattle the window-pane?
If I close my eyes to sleep just so,
It wakes me up again;
If I hide my head beneath the spread,
You speak so soft and low
That I cannot hear what you have said,
Oh, why does the big wind blow?"

"Let us play, my darling, a merry play,
The winds are four big brooms,
That sweep the world on a windy day,
As Mary sweeps our rooms.
The south wind is the parlour brush,
That sweeps in a quiet way,
But the north wind comes with roar and
rush
On the world-wide sweeping day.

"Like Mary sweeping the halls and stairs
Is the work of the good west broom,
And the sweetest odours, the softest airs,
Float over the world's wide room.
But to-night the broom from the east is
here,
And with it comes the rain,
Like John when he brushes the porch,
my dear,
And hoses the window-pane."

The little boy laughed and cuddled close
In his warm and downy bed,
"I hear the broom and I hear the hose,
And I like them both," he said,
And so, though the rain may pelt away,
And the big wind loudly roar,
He remembers the wide world's sweep-
ing day,
And thinks of the big brooms four.
—Youth's Companion.

Slaying the Dragon.

BY MRS. D. O. CLARK.

CHAPTER I.

THE DRAGON STALKS ABROAD.

Fairport-by-the-Sea was a veritable garden of Eden. Every garden of Eden has its serpent. Fairport was no exception; and although in every sense of the word an earthly paradise, the trail of the serpent was visible to even the most casual observer. The curse of this village was the Maypole Tavern. When this nuisance sprang into existence it was dignified by the name of restaurant, and for a time its true nature was hidden. But all disguises had long ago been discarded, and the Maypole appeared in its real character, a drinking and gambling place. Sad to relate, the place continued to be well patronized.

When times were hard and money scarce, Landlord Merton's business continued brisk, and his coffers were rapidly filling with the price of men's souls. His best customers were the fishermen. Fairport was a seaport town, and a part of the community was composed of sailors and fishermen. In the spring and summer large numbers of these men went out in fishing vessels for a longer or shorter cruise, as the case might be. In the winter the majority of them remained at home and spent time and money at the Maypole, loafing about the fire and spinning long yarns.

There was Rast Dow, an industrious mechanic when he brought his wife Phoebe from her English home and settled in Fairport. Three happy years passed, and then came the terrible warfare with the dragon intemperance. The Maypole sprang into existence, and from that time Dow was a changed man. He frequented the tavern daily, neglected his work, and was discharged by his employers. He became a fisherman, and hired a poor cottage at the Cove for his family. His son Jamie inherited a love for liquor, and young manhood found him a drunkard. The case of Erastus Dow serves as an illustration of the havoc which the tavern made among the fishermen. There were Peter MacDuff, Tom Kinmon, Tyler Matthews, Tom Barton, and a host of others following hard in the same downward path. It is no wonder that the fishermen's wives hated Landlord Merton and cursed his terrible traffic.

Opposite the Maypole, and in striking contrast to it in its aims, was a small church which had long been struggling for existence. It was small in numbers, poor financially, and wholly under the influence of one man, Judge Seabury. He was Judge of the Supreme Court at Salem, and was a wealthy, aristocratic man. He owned all that part of the village of Fairport occupied by the fishermen and their families, and he was a

man who used his power with iron hand. He did not consider the people at the Cove worth any attention, and was opposed to having schools established for their benefit.

"What can you teach such animals?" he asked contemptuously, when good Deacon Ray pleaded with him to assist peculiarly in such an enterprise. The fishermen hated the man, but dared not speak against him outside, knowing he had the power to turn them out of doors. Moreover, they were anxious to be employed by him when he fitted out expeditions to the Banks, or the Bay of St. Lawrence, or the West Indies, which he frequently did.

The Judge was not a member of the church, but of the parish, and his method of church polity, which has proved disastrous in so many country churches, wrought evil in the church at Fairport. The Judge dictated, and the church submitted. If anything was done contrary to his wishes, he threatened to withdraw his support. He had settled his brother-in-law, the Reverend Phineas Felton, over this little church, partly because he wished the reins in his own hands, and partly because the reverend gentleman was a man after his own heart.

Mr. Felton was a type of a glass of ministers not uncommon fifty years ago. He imbibed the social tendencies of his English ancestors, and enjoyed a glass of wine as thoroughly as did his kinsman, Judge Seabury. Indeed, when the temperance question began to be agitated, he declared the movement to be a specimen of "bald fanaticism," and the propagators "lunatics." He considered it to be an infringement upon his moral liberty. It was dictating as to what he, in matters of conscience, should do,—a right which he, at least, would not yield to any man or class of men. He therefore held his position with the same dogged tenacity with which he held the five points of Calvinism, and boldly denounced total abstinence as a subterfuge of the arch-enemy, and the pledge system as a libel on one's manliness and strength of character.

To be sure, he deplored the fact that the Maypole attracted so much patronage, and pitied those who were so weak morally that they could not drink just enough and no more. But he made no attempt to battle against this rapidly growing evil of intemperance, and dismissed the subject with the words, "Men will not always make fools of themselves. They will learn moderation from experience." Such was the pastor of the little church in Fairport-by-the-Sea, a church which had stood for a score of years, opposite the Maypole, having a name to live, and yet dead. And such briefly was the social condition of Fairport, at the time our story begins.

It was a cold November night. The wind howled through the leafless branches of the trees, and chilled man and beast with its icy breath. Ever and anon a fresh gust brought with it a mixture of snow and rain. The roar of the breakers could be heard distinctly above the howling of the wind. Altogether it was a desolate night. The lights in the old Maypole looked very inviting as they sent welcome rays far out into the darkness.

"We shall have business enough to-night," chuckled the landlord, as he looked out of the window, at the same time rubbing his palms together with evident satisfaction. "Look here, John!" addressing his nephew, who stood smoking a cigar, "put a lamp in every window which faces the street, and spread the curtains, that all who pass may see the good cheer which old Maypole can give. Ha, ha! the mice are beginning to fall into the trap," he muttered, as he went forward to meet a half-dozen rough fishermen who were starting for their homes at the Cove, but could not get by the Maypole without making an informal call.

"Give us some grog, quick! We're almost frozen," called out Rast Dow. "We've got a good two miles to walk in this sleet. Fill her up to the brim," he cried. Several times he drained the glass, with the rapidity of an old toper. It was not long before the effects of the draught became apparent.

"Long live the Maypole!" he cried noisily. "I tell you, boys, I feel a good deal more like a spinnin' wheel nor I did before."

Loud laughter greeted Rast's speech. "Guess you're pretty well set up!" "Don't b'lieve you'll ever get ter the Cove ter night!" "The old fool don't know when ter stop drinkin'!"

Such were the remarks which came from the group of men who had accompanied Rast. The drunken man seemed to realize the force of their words, for,

straightening himself, and buttoning his coat with trembling fingers, he staggered toward the door.

"G-Guess I'll go now an' see what the o-old woman's up ter. Jessa like's not sh-she'll lock me out, or a-set the young rascal t-ter play some t-t-tricks on his old dad."

With this attempt at joking, he turned to go. But the wily landlord did not care to have his game slip through his fingers so easily. He had designs on the crowd of fishermen before him. He knew they had that morning disposed of a load of fish, and he had reason to suspect that the money was in their pockets. Once get the party drunk, and the rest could be managed without difficulty.

"You're not going home so early, are you, Rast? Phoebe won't care about your staying a while longer, if you don't break orders again. Boys," he added, as Rast lifted the door latch, "here is a specimen worth looking at—a man tied to his wife's apron strings. Ha! ha! Has to mind Phoebe! Ha, ha!"

These stinging words, together with the shout which arose from the noisy crowd, took immediate effect. Turning upon his persecutor, Rast cried, "Who says I'm tied to my wife's apron strings? Let him say it again, if he dare!"

"Let him alone, Cap'n," growled Tom Kinmon, a burly fisherman, who had been a silent spectator of this side show. "What d'yer want to mad the crazy coot fur? He'll make things lively fur ye ef ye git him started. Rast, old fellow, ye're all right ef ye keep cool. Merton's only chaffin'. But ye're got enough drink inside ye fur one night."

"Guess I-I know wh-when I've go-got enuff," stammered Rast, leaving his post by the door, and going with unsteady steps toward the bar. "I'll dare ye ter shake fur drinks, Merton!"

The landlord accepted this challenge, and produced the dice.

"That Merton," muttered Tom Kinmon, "means ter git all the money from this crowd. He sha'n't git any more of mine then I'm willin' he should. Taint my business to look after Rast or his money. He's in fur it, now. Phoebe 'll never see a cent fur this week's work. The Cap'n's an old thief!"

"What did you order?" said Merton. "I thought I heard you say something."

"Umph!" replied the fisherman. "Give me a glass of gin-sling, and mind ye, Cap'n, ye needn't bring me the kind ye bulldozed Rast with. Ye give me the best, or I'll teach ye the one lesson of ye'er life. Ye're the curse of Fairport, and ye know it, and we know it, but we're fools enuff to come here and drink ye'er pison. But our money isn't all yers, and ye've no right to fleece us as ye do. And mind ye, ef ye try ye cranks on me ye'll ketch it."

The landlord covered before the plain words of the old salt, and ordered his nephew, John Merton, to wait on Tom Kinmon, was not a man to be trifled with, as the inmates of the tavern well knew. He rarely got drunk, although he was a regular customer at the Maypole. Tom drank his potion leisurely, then placing his glass on the counter, stood watching the different groups of card players.

While the landlord, who had enticed Rast to play, was busy with the game, his nephew quietly emptied the contents of the till into his own pocket, and stole into the outer darkness.

The bell in the church steeple struck the hour of midnight. The chimes rang out slowly and solemnly, still the old tavern echoed with shouts, oaths, and drunken revelry. At last there came a sound upon the night wind which startled the faces of the debauchees. An agonizing shriek rose on the air. Again and again it sounded in the ears of the affrighted crowd. Hurrying feet came up the steps. The door was flung open, and on the threshold stood Phoebe Dow, her face white as death and her long black hair hanging loosely about her shoulders. Her great anguish had driven her out in the storm to seek her husband. There she stood, looking wildly around, but uttering no word.

Rast Dow sprang to his feet, sobered by the sudden spectacle.

"What is the matter, Phoebe?" he cried. "Ye look as though ye had gone clean daft. Out with it, girl!"

"My boy, my Jamie!" shrieked the woman. "This is all I've got left of him," holding out a sheet of paper on which was some writing. "He's run away to sea. I shall never see him again! My boy! my boy! Curse the Maypole tavern! Curse you and yours!" she cried, pointing her finger to the frightened landlord. "You tempted my boy to drink when you knew his weakness for it. You have ruined my husband, body and soul. You have robbed me of all I held dear in life. If there be

a God may he avenge my wrongs speedily." With these words Phoebe fell to the floor senseless.

(To be continued.)

CIGARETTES.

The increasing use of cigarettes by the youth of Canada is not a hopeful sign of an omen of healthy, robust manhood in coming generations. Very young boys, and, it is said, girls too, are becoming subject to the smoking habit, and the light is on body and mind. We have on our statute books a law prohibiting the sale of cigarettes to minors. Parents, school-teachers and law officers should take an interest in knowing that it is enforced.

A paragraph from a Japan paper will show what enlightened sentiment in the far East is proposing concerning young smokers. The threatened bill for checking the vice of tobacco smoking among the young has actually been introduced in the House of Representatives. Its introducer is Mr. Nemoto Sho, an influential member, and its provisions are that if any person of less than fourteen years of age is found smoking tobacco, the 'appurtenances' of the smoker shall be confiscated, and, in the event of a second offence, or of continued smoking after warning, a fine of from 10 sen to 1 yen may be imposed. Dealers wittingly selling tobacco in any form to young persons shall be liable to the same penalty.

We may add to the above a description given in The Good Health Magazine for October of the "snipe-shooters" of Chicago. Their work is intimately connected with the cigarette industry, and is to gather up the castaway stubs of cigarettes and cigars. It is their business to gather at least three pounds of stubs a day, for which they receive something to eat and miserable lodgings. It is estimated that there are picked up daily from the filth of the streets of Chicago, by boys working under one man, twelve hundred pounds of cigar stubs, to be re-made into cigarettes. David Paulson, M.D., is the authority for this statement.—Guardian.

The Sparrow's Song.

I'm only a little sparrow,
A bird of low degree;
My life is of little value,
But the dear Lord cares for me.

He gives me a coat of feathers;
It is very plain, I know,
Without a speck of crimson—
For it was not made for show.

But it keeps me warm in winter,
And it shields me from the rain;
Were it bordered with gold and purple,
Perhaps it would make me vain.

And now the springtime cometh,
I will build me a little nest,
With many a chirp of pleasure,
In the spot I like the best.

I have no barn or storehouse,
I neither sow nor reap;
God gives me a sparrow's portion,
And never a seed to keep.

If my meat is sometimes scanty,
Clean picking makes it sweet;
I have always enough to feed me,
And life is more than meat.

I know there are many sparrows—
All ove, the world they are found—
But our heavenly Father knoweth
When one of them falls to the ground

The Johnstown flood was repeated on a smaller scale at Austin, Texas, April 7, when the accumulations of sixty hours of terrific rainfall in the headwaters of the Colorado river swept away the huge dam in Austin, and let loose the contents of a reservoir thirty miles long, half a mile wide and sixty feet deep. It is thought that nearly fifty lives were lost. The property damage will reach \$2,000,000.

My friend, have you heard of the town of No-good, on the banks of the river Slow, where the Sometime-or-other scents the air and the soft Go-easys grow? It lies in the province of Leterslide; that tired feeling is native there; it's the home of the reckless Idontcare, where the Giveitups abide. The town is as old as the human race, and it grows with the flight of years; it is wrapped in the fog of the idler's dreams; its streets are paved with discarded schemes and are sprinkled with useless tears.