

A Noble Pledge.

I pledge my brain God's thoughts to think;
My lips no fire or foam to drink
From alcoholic cup, nor link
With my pure breath tobacco's taint;
For have I not a right to be
As wholesome and as pure as she
Who, through the years so glad and free,
Moves gently onward to meet me?
A knight of the New Chivalry,
Of Christ and temperance I would be,
In nineteen hundred, come and see.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK
Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 12, 1896.

HOW ARE DRUNKARDS MADE?

In various ways Here is one "Now, you watch those children. They'll drink half that beer before they get home, and their mother will scold me for not giving a good pint, and I've given nearly a quart," said the bartender of a down town saloon the other day to a Herald reporter, referring to two little girls of six and eight, thinly clad, who came for a pint of beer. The reporter did watch the little ones. They had scarcely got outside the saloon door when the one that carried the tin pail lifted it to her lips and took a draught. Then her companion enjoyed a few swallows. A little further on they entered a tenement house hallway, and both again took a sip.

"I have lots of such customers," said the bartender, when the reporter returned to the saloon to light his cigar. "Girls and boys and women form half our trade. We call it family trade. It pays our expenses. Our profits come from the drinkers at the bar. But I tell you what, half the children who come here drink. That's how drunkards are made. Their parents send them for beer. They see the old folks tittle, and begin to taste the beer themselves. Few of the children who come in here for beer or ale carry a full pint home. Sometimes two or three come in together, and if you'll watch them you'll hear one begging the one who carries the pail for a sip. We must sell it, however, when their parents send for it. We are bound to do so. Business is business. We don't keep a temperance shop."

HOW HARRY WON THE PRIZE.

BY G. C. ARMSTRONG, B.A.

Here is a true story of a Canadian boy—a story to cheer and to stimulate boys who are enjoying the advantages of early struggles in preparing themselves for life.

Harry was brought up on a large farm in Ontario. He knew no holidays. He attended school regularly. His out-of-school hours and Saturdays were given to a boy's duties on the farm. Nature rewarded his industry with a clear mind and a sturdy frame.

It is well "to build castles in the air"; we set to work to construct them on more solid foundations. Harry had dreamt of his future. His books and his school were dear to him. He drank eagerly at the fountain.

When the hero of our story was twelve years of age, he was sent to the school in the adjoining village, some two miles away. The master of the school offered a prize for punctuality. It was to be

given to the pupil who should be neither late nor absent during the year. In his long, lonely walks to and from school, Harry determined to win this prize.

The year wore on. November came and the "new boy" was almost alone in the race. But the crisis was at hand.

One Thursday morning, Harry's father told him that he was going that day to the family shoemaker's, some miles distant. "Your boots need half-soiling," said his father, "you had better remain at home to-day, and let me take them with me." Now Harry had but one pair of boots, a long-legged, kip-skin pair, a country boy's pride. What was he to do? The boots must go. He could not go bare-footed, as it was too late in the season. Harry gives up his boots, but not his determination to win. He repairs to the attic and selects two shoes cast off by other members of the family. They are whole, but they are not mates. One is narrow in the toe, the other is broad, and both much too large.

Eight o'clock arrives, and he is ready for school without consultation with any one. How many times the battle with Harry's natural pride was fought and won on the way to school that morning we shall not tell. The forenoon passed and the shoes were not observed. But with noon came their discovery. All the school came to gaze, and a merciless fire of comment fell upon his sensitive ears. The day is over and courage has been given to bear the railery in silence.

The closing day has come. The prize for punctuality is awarded to Harry. Loud applause greets the winner, but none knew the price of the victory.

Harry is now a man and fills an honourable position in life. He has won many honours since that day, but few have given him the pleasure of his first prize. He treasures it as one of the inspirations of his life.

Toronto.

DRINKING TEARS.

In several places in the Psalms, the metaphor is used of the beverage of tears, but how often in real life is the custom of drinking the tears of their wives and children fulfilled in the lives of intemperate husbands and fathers.

Josh Speeler, an old toper of long standing and capacity, on being invited by some of his boon companions to "Take a drink," replied, "Boys, I don't drink without you take what I do." The "boys" were surprised.

"Perhaps he wants to run some castor oil in on us," said one.

"No, I'm square."

They agreed, and ranged themselves along the bar. All looked at Speeler.

"Mr. Bartender," said he, "give me a glass of water."

"What? W-a-t-e-r?"

"Yes, water. It's a new drink to me, boys, I admit, and it's a scarce article around here, I expect. But let me tell you about it. A few days ago a party of us went fishing. We took a fine share of whiskey along, and had a jolly time: 'Long towards evening I got powerful drunk, and crawled off under a tree and went to sleep. The boys drank up all the whiskey and came back to town. They thought it a good joke 'cause they left me out there drunk, and told it around the town with a big laugh. My son got hold of the report and told it at home. I lay under that tree all night, and when I woke in the morning my wife sat right thar side o' me. She said nothin' when I woke up, but turned her head away, and I could see she war a-cryin'. 'I wish I had suthin' to drink,' says I. Then she took a cup wot she had fetched with her, and went to a spring that was near and fetched it full. Just as she was handin' it to me she leant over to hide her eyes, and I saw a tear drop inter the cup. I tuk the cup and

ten men with scoop shovels to throw away money as fast as we are wasting it for grog.—Observer.

The Boy With the Barley Loaves.

BY CHRISTIAN BURKE.

We do not even know his name,
His lineage, or his age,
And yet he lives in deathless fame
Upon the Gospel page.

The people 'round the Master pressed,
The sick, the poor, the sad—
He stands distinct from all the rest,
A little fisher lad.

We cannot guess what prompts his thought,

That those five loaves he brings;
Two fish he may himself have caught
He carries on his strings.

He waits with patient, upraised head,
The hungry crowd he sees;
The fish are here, the barley bread,
And yet what use are these?

Still, all he has his Lord may take,
And then it must be well—
The Master took, and blessed and brake,
And wrought his miracle!

O glad child-heart, so sure and swift
The perfect way to choose,
O happy hands that bore the gift
The Master deigned to use!

We lose the lad amid the throng,
No more of him we know,
Nor if his life were short or long,
Nor what its joy or woe.

Only in one recorded place,
The veil is backward cast,
To let that innocent boyish face,
Smile on us from the past.

Thus to an age of noisy claims
One lesson more is given:
The fair deeds live, the actors' names
Are only known in heaven!

**JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.
PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.**

DECEMBER 20, 1896.

Hymn 118.

"O hope of every contrite heart,
O joy of all the meek,
To those who ask, how kind thou art,
How good to those who seek!"

For the name of the author of the hymn and of the tune, see last lesson.

DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST.

He is truly the hope of every contrite heart. Hope is the expectation of future good. Where can men fix their hopes with certainty, but only on Christ? He is the firm, immovable foundation, on which the hope of the church, for time and eternity, is fixed. There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved. Some entertain the idea that riches will make them happy, but how often these make themselves wings and flee away; and even when they abide they do not yield satisfaction or abiding comfort. Others look to scenes of pleasure, and suppose that by revelling in them, happiness will be sure to follow. But how all these fail, like the crackling of thorns under a pot. There is nothing certain but what Christ supplies.

CONTRITE PERSONS.

Jesus is the hope of all such. But who are the contrite? Those who are deeply penitent, that is, those who under a sense of having grieved God, are sorry for their misconduct, and mourn before him, and repent as in dust and ashes. The publican felt thus, when he stood afar off—that is, away from the holy place in the temple—and "smote upon his breast," in token of the anguish which he felt within, and prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner." We see a marked difference between the prayer of the Pharisee and that of the publican. The Pharisee felt no sense of guilt, he rather boasted of his righteousness, and thanked God that he was different from other men.

APPLICATION.

Do our Epworth League young people feel the contrite spirit? They may not, at least, we trust that they have not committed gross sins, but a review of their short lives will bring many things to their remembrance which will produce sorrow, and prompt them to say, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." How delightful is the promise, "To that man I will look, even to him who is of a humble and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Take Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and you will find him to be the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.



SKATERS ON THE ICE AT MONTREAL.

Skating Song.

Hurrah for the wind that is keen and chill,
As it skirts the meadows and sweeps the hill!

Hurrah for the pulses of swift delight
That tingle and beat in the winter's night,

When over the crystal lake we glide,
Flying like birds o'er the frozen tide!

Hurrah for the lad with the sparkling eye,
For the joyous laugh and courage high!
Hurrah for the health that is glad and strong,

So that life is gay as a merry song;
For the motion fearless, smooth and fleet,
When skates are wings to the flying feet!

Hurrah for the landscape broad and fair,
Spread boldly out in the brilliant air!
Hurrah for the folds of the sheeted snow,
On the mountains high, in the valleys low!

Hurrah for the track where the skaters glide,
Fearless as over a highway tried!

Who chooses may boast of the summer-time;

Hurrah, we cry, for the frost and rime,
For the icicles pendant from roof and eaves,

For snow that covers the next year's sheaves!

Hurrah for the gleaming, glassy lake,
Where the skaters bold their pleasure take!

They say that Scott did not make as great a success as he should of his "Ivanhoe." Perhaps he didn't advertise it as extensively as he does his Emulsion.

drank, and raisin' my hands to heaven,
I vowed, God helpin' me, I'd never drink
my wife's tears again as I had been doin'
in' for the last twenty years, and that I
was goin' to stop. You boys know who
it was that left me."

**LIQUOR ARITHMETIC OBJECT-
LESSON.**

"Boy at the head of the class, what is the United States paying for liquor as a nation?"

"Nine hundred millions annually."

"Step to the blackboard, my boy. First take a rule and measure this silver dollar. How thick is it?"

"Nearly an eighth of an inch."

"Well, sir, how many of them can you put in an inch?"

"Between eight and nine."

"Give the benefit of the doubt; call it nine. How many inches would it require to pile these \$900,000,000 in?"

"One hundred million inches."

"How many feet would that be?"

"Eight million, three hundred and thirty-three thousand, three hundred and thirty-three feet."

"How many rods is that?"

"Five hundred and five thousand and fifty rods."

"How many miles is that?"

"One thousand, five hundred and seventy-eight miles."

"Miles of what?"

"One thousand, five hundred and seventy-eight miles of silver dollars, laid down, packed close together, our national liquor bill would make. This is only one year's grog bill."

Reader, if you need facts about this temperance question, nail that to a post and read it occasionally. It would take