

THE YEARS PASS ON.

"When I'm a woman, you'll see what I'll do! I'll be great, and good, and noble, and true; I'll visit the sick and relieve the poor—No one shall ever be turned from my door—But I'm only a little girl now."

And so the years pass on.

"When I'm older I'll have more time To think of heaven and things sublime; My time is now full of studies and play, But I really mean to begin some day.

I am only a little girl now."

And so the years pass on.

"When I'm a woman," a gay maiden said, "I'll try to do right, and not be afraid, I'll be a Christian, and give up the joys Of the world with all its dazzling toys.

But I'm only a young girl now."

And so the years pass on.

"Ah me!" sighed a woman gray with years, Her heart full of cares and doubts and fear "I've kept putting off the time to be good, Instead of *beginning* to do as I should, But I'm an old woman now."

And so the years pass on.

Now is the time to begin to do right; To-day, whether skies be dark or bright; Make others happy by good deeds of love, Looking to Jesus for help from above,

And then you'll be happy now,

And as the years pass on.

—*Christian at Work.*

Our Story.

BOB'S TALKING LEG.

"That wooden leg of yours must be rather inconvenient."

"Maybe, sir; but I walk with it better than when I had the natural pair complete."

Bob was our crossing sweeper, and a sort of public messenger self-established, but recognized in time as one of the institutions of the Bank. The road just opposite our main entrance was rather wide for a country town, and it was here Bob kept a path carefully swept in all weathers.

When employed by the Bank or one of the tradesmen with a message, Bob would leave his broom leaning against the letter box, and go on his way quite certain that the most mischievous boy in the place would not interfere with it. Bob was so good natured and kind to all that even his broom was respected.

He was a bit of a character, and generally wore a post boy's cap and an old red hunting coat when on duty. But these were only sort of trade signs; and work done. Bob put aside his "uniform" and assumed the garb of a respectable laborer.

And a laborer he had been once upon a time—a man well known in the town, and not a little notorious for his drinking; but he shall tell his own story. Listen to him as he relates it to me.

"Walk better with a wooden leg than with two sound ones," I said, "how can that be? I cannot fancy a wooden leg would be better than either of mine."

"I was not speaking of your legs, sir," replied Bob, dryly, "but of the pair I had. They were not given to walking very straight."

"That must have been your fault, Bob," I said.

"Well, yes, sir," he said, "of course it was; but I was speaking in a sort of meddlesor, you see."

"I hear you are fond of a metaphor," I returned; "but tell me about this leg of yours. How did you get it?"

"Drink gave it to me," replied Bob, "and I must say that it ain't very grateful to drink in return; for although it makes noise enough in orninary, it knocks double as loud whenever I'm nigh a public

house. It says 'don't' as plainly as you can, sir—meaning, don't go in. I was once nearly led back into the old ways, and was going into 'The King's Head' with a friend, as I hadn't seen for years, but this leg wouldn't go in; t'other went over the step right enough, but the wooden one tripped up, and down I went. 'All right,' I says, 'you know how I got you, and I'll go back again,' and out I went, dragging my friend with me."

"Of course," he added, "I don't mean to say as the leg knows what it's doing—that's my meddlesor way of speaking; but it's there, and it is always stumping out the same story, 'Don't drink, don't drink.' Just you listen to it."

He stumped rapidly up and down in front of me, and really 'e leg and his sound foot gave out so s not unlike the words he had spoke.

"You hear, sir," he said, "the wooden leg says 'Don't,' and t'other says 'drink.' Put 'em both together, and you've got good advice—'Don't drink!'"

"Undoubtedly," I replied, "but will you tell me how you came to lose your limb? It is a quiet day, and you are not likely to be interrupted for a few minutes."

"It's soon told," said Bob. "Eight years ago I was a bricklayer's laborer, a smart, active fellow when I hadn't a drinking fit on; but I used to break out for the week and fortnight at a time and leave my work, and starve them at home in the way of drunkards generally. When the drink's in, kindness and love and industry is out, which is a meddlesor I'll have you make a note of."

I promised not to forget it, and with his hands crossed on the top of his broom he went on with his story.

"When sober, I worked as a runner. I headed a gang of laborers, and timed 'em, as it were. If there isn't a runner they don't keep up the work, and get into confusion. One day, when I was a little worse for drink, I went to the works, and kept at it all right until 11 o'clock, when a man from a public house close by came round. I had two pints of him, and that, with what I had taken, finished me. The next time I went up the ladder, I lost my hold, and the sky seemed to turn right over; then I heard a shout, and I lost my senses."

"When I came to," he said, "I found myself at the hospital, with a sensation of being as helpless as a child. At first I didn't feel any pain, but soon my leg began to throb, and I was going to put my hand down, when the nurse, as was close by, stops me. 'Don't touch it,' she said, 'you've injured yourself.' They gave me some medicine and it soothed me and I went off to sleep. When I awoke again several grave looking gentlemen were standing about the bed talking, but they stopped as soon as it was known I was awake. I asked for my wife, and they told me she would soon come to me. To cut a long story short, sir, one of the kindest told me that my leg must be taken off, or I should lose my life."

"And what am I to do in the world with one leg, sir?" I asked.

"He told me to leave all to the wisdom of God, but I didn't know much of religion then, and found no comfort in it. That night they gave me something, and I lost my senses. While I was in that state my leg was taken off, and I shan't forget the feeling when I came round and found it gone."

"And yet it wasn't exactly the feeling in the leg that told me so, for at first I fancied it was there; and what is more, I feel it now, and a very curious thing it is. But I'll get back to the hospital, where, after my leg was taken off, my poor wife used to come and cry over me as if I had been the best of husbands, instead of one of the worst; but women, speaking in meddlesor, are angels on earth, they are."

"With my wife a gentleman used to come. He was grave and quiet and kind,

and I recognized him through having often seen him down our street visiting the sick and poor. I wouldn't have nothing to do with him in the old days, but lying there maimed and helpless, I was glad enough to listen to him, and I'm thankful to this day that I did so; for there I first really understood what salvation through the Saviour meant for me and other sinners, and learnt to see the blessings of a sober life."

"I was a long time getting well, for my constitution was terribly cut up, and it was supposed at one time that I could not live; but prayer and faith saved me, and I got about at last, full of good resolves and hope for the future."

"Being only a laborer, I wasn't fit for much with a wooden leg, so after casting about, I thought I'd take this crossing the man who had it afore having just died of drink—and try to get a little public messengering. The young gentlemen inside the bank has their little joke, and calls me the 'Dot and carry one,' but I don't mind that. I shall not object to my leg so long as it keeps on saying, 'Don't, and the other leg may say 'Drink' as often as it likes. Don't drink. I've told lots of people what my legs say, and some as do drink thinks it funny to call me 'the man with the talking leg.'"

"And this wooden leg have done some good to others. When I came out of the hospital and stumped around to my mates, and told 'em what I'd suffered, and that I'd signed the pledge, five of 'em did the same, and three have kept it to this day. The other two went back and one is dead, and t'other nobody knows where. He left a wife and three children behind him."

"Wh' first took my stand here I got hard messages. I had a bad name and people mistrusted my leg, but when they got to know that it was a leg that wouldn't go into a public house, work began to roll in. On Saturday I'm running about all day, and I lose a lot at the crossing, no doubt; but the messenger money is fairly earned, while a shilling a day gained at the crossing is very fair pay. I sweeps it in the morning about seven, then again at nine, and so on every two hours if I am here, and if you put it all together you wont make more than an hours fair work of it. I like the messengering as it's honest labor; and I'm trusted, and it fits in with t'other, so that I'm hardly ever idle."

"And what do you make per week?" I asked.

"One way and another, about as much as I did as a laborer," Bob replied, "and the missus does a bit of washing and clear starching." (Bob himself was renowned for the linen he wore), "and we've got three children, and a little picture of a home. Mr. Sawyer, the photographer, he took me here one morning, and he put a lot of my pictures in his window. I've got one at home he gave me, but it ain't quite right. He ought to have done the jacket red, and it came out white; but the leg is took splendid, and that is the chief point. They do tell me that the publicans hate the very sound of my leg, as the very noise it makes is a sort of accusation against 'em, and I do know that it is often cast into their teeth by angry customers."

"So you see, sir," said Bob in conclusion, "that I walk better in every way since I had this wooden leg, and I'm content to travel so until it shall please God to call me away to heaven, where Jesus has perfected all things, and where He will reign forever."

A voice from a house on the opposite side called Bob from me, and I walked away, musing on what I had heard. The story was not without profit to me, and I trust it will be of benefit to the reader, who has yet to realize the deadly work drink is everywhere doing in this fair land of ours. *The British Workman.*

"PLAYING AT MISSIONS."

Said Dr. Duff: "We are playing at missions." It is not altogether strange that this strong, almost bitter utterance should have been forced from this great-hearted, eager, self forgetful servant of God, as he looked on the one hand at the people of God in Christian lands, and on the other hand at the condition of the heathen world.

"Playing at Missions." There are probably ten millions of people in Christendom, each one of whom has professedly devoted himself to the service of Jesus Christ; each one of whom has said, "I no longer live unto myself; I no longer live, but it is Christ that liveth in me, I am not my own. I am bought with a price," each one of whom has pledged himself to obey the last command of the Lord, "Go, teach all nations." And yet what do we see? In our own land, certainly in our own denomination throughout this land, but a fraction of the 23,000 churches do aught for the cause of missions, and, in the fraction that do anything, it is all done by but a fraction of the church. It would be safe to say that to withdraw from the Missionary work the contributions of fifty churches and of a hundred contributors, would be to cripple it fatally.

We profess to have consecrated our all to Christ and his cause. And yet, as we look over a Christian congregation, how often do we see a single Christian lady wearing diamonds that would support a school, a missionary, for a year? How many a professed Christian is spending more on one of his horses than he gives to the spread of the gospel over all lands? How many a Christian is spending in what is sheer luxury and ostentation an amount that would confer countless blessings on the heathen world? Surely we are "playing at missions."

The women of Carthage were not playing at warfare, when they cut off their hair to make bowstrings for the defenders of the city. The people of Holland were not playing, when they broke down the dykes and let in the sea over the fields and orchards that they might drown out the Spaniards. The German women were not playing at patriotism, when they gave their gold ornaments to the government for the expenses of the war against Napoleon, and wore, instead, ornaments of iron. The Moravian missionary was not playing at missions when he consented to be sold as a slave that he might be admitted to the West Indies, and might preach to the negroes. But we, are we not playing?

And when we look at the work to be done, the hundreds of millions to be evangelized, and at the scale of our preparations, we are compelled to realize bitterly that we are "playing at missions." Is it not time that we ceased playing, and began to be in earnest.

Presbyterian Record.

PLEASANTRIES.

A doctor went out for a day's hunting, and on coming home complained that he hadn't killed anything. "That's because you didn't attend to your legitimate business," said his wife.

"Did you know," said a cunning Yankee to a Jew, "that they hang Jews and donkeys together in Poland?" "Indeed! then it is well that you and I are not there," retorted the Jew.

A faithful brother in a Fairfield (Iowa) church recently prayed for the absent members who were "prostrate on beds of sickness and chairs of wellness."

A Galveston school-teacher had a great deal of trouble making a boy understand his lesson. Finally, however, he succeeded, and, drawing a long breath, remarked to the boy, "If it wasn't for me, you would be the biggest donkey on Galveston Island."