



King Alcohol.

Mr. Thomas Wilson Smith kindly sends us this poem, which was asked for by one of our readers. He says: This poem was taken from a book of Temperance prose and poetry, by Professor Duncan.

KING ALCOHOL.

King alcohol has many forms
By which he catches men;
He is a beast of many horns,
And ever thus has been.

Chorus.

There's rum and gin, and beer and wine,
And brandy of logwood hue;
And hock and port and ale combine,
To make a man look blue;
He says, be merry, for here's good sherry,
And Tom and Jerry, champagne and perry,
And spirits of every hue;
Oh! are they not a fiendish crew,
As ever a mortal knew.

King alcohol is very sly,
A liar from the first,
He'll make you drink until you're dry,
Then because you thirst.
There's rum, etc.

King alcohol has had his day,
His kingdom's crumbling fast,
His votaries are heard to say,
Our drunken days are past.

Chorus.

Nor rum and gin, nor beer and wine,
Nor brandy of logwood hue,
Nor hock and port, and ale combine,
To make a man look blue;
For now they're many without their sherry,
Or Tom and Jerry, champagne and perry,
Or spirits of every hue,
And now they are a happy crew,
As ever a mortal knew.

Before the Boy.

(Charles Herbert, in the 'Alliance and Temperance Reformer'.)

'Ralph, Ralph! Don't go in there!' called the mother from upstairs, but the warning came too late. With the rapid rush of boyhood, Ralph had entered with his school-fellow, son of a neighboring doctor, with him, and then he stood aghast, for his father was trying to rise from the chair, holding on with both hands to the table.

It was too late; Ralph would have withdrawn instantly, but his father had caught sight of his son's friend, and with drunken gravity insisted on being introduced.

'Ber-ring him in, Ralph!' he said. 'I'm ver' glad to make (hic) 'quaintance. The doctor's son? Doctor's shun? Quite so! Nice boy, ver'! So's Ralph ver' good boy. Dear boy, Ralph. Same school's you? Ver' good school. Ver' good school. Take my'd 'vice, work hard.' And he fumbled in his pocket for some money to give them, but Mrs. Connor was on the scene by this time, and, crimson of cheek, was suggesting that the boys should come upstairs, and to Ralph's great relief his father made no objection.

Mrs. Connor's soul was on fire with indignation, and for the next few days there was an iciness of speech and demeanour towards her husband that found its way even to his drugged sensibilities. She had borne the perpetual anxieties, the constant necessity of shielding him, that his recent outburst of drinking had entailed, but this flew to the mother part of her and wounded her more than all.

But even his wife's quite scorn might have been endured philosophically, for thousands of men acquire that habit by long practice, but Ralph Connor, sen., shrank before the steely look in his boy's eyes. He was perfectly respectful, but he sat about with his hands clenched, and never sought to go out. Only at school

times he would depart as usual, and return looking worried and wearied.

Nothing had been said, however, till one day, at breakfast, his father, after opening a letter, looked up sternly and exclaimed: 'Ralph, what is the meaning of this?'

Ralph flushed, then went white to the very lips, but he looked at his father with a quiet determination in every line of his face, and his mother, startled, gazed from one to the other in dismay.

'The headmaster writes to know why Ralph has not been at school this week,' Mr. Connor declared savagely. 'Where have you been, sir!'

'Walking about,' returned Ralph, quietly.

His father regarded him with astonishment. 'Well, perhaps you will explain yourself—if you can,' he added.

'I've had enough of it,' said Ralph, rising from the table, but speaking firmly and deliberately. 'That boy I brought in last week told the others, and they seem to think it a good joke. I'm not going back to any place where they make a joke of my father. I'd punch their heads if it were a joke, but the worst of it is, it's true. Send me to a board school, if you like. The boys there, perhaps, are used to it.' And he strode out of the room.

It was a veritable bombshell.

Mr. Connor sat looking after his son in dazed fashion; then he glanced shamefacedly at his wife, but beyond the dull brick-red on her cheeks she gave no sign, uttered no word.

Presently he said, and there was real agony quivering in his tone, 'Poor Ralph! Ashamed of his own father!'

'He'd be just as proud of you if you'd let him,' said his wife quickly.

But he made no answer, only got up and left the house, while his wife busied herself over clearing away with the servant, torn between a desire to comfort and counsel her son, and the desire not to say one word that would appear to side against his father. If your sympathies go out to her, remember there are thousands like her, who to keep their children loyal to their fathers, have to watch warily, yes, and even to lie, lest the idol of fatherhood be shattered on its altar, and reverence depart with it.

The day passed slowly by, for neither husband nor son came in to meals. Mrs. Connor grew very anxious, but while she was standing at the window watching the street, she saw, to her amazement, father and son coming along together, and there was that in Ralph's step that made a strange hope rise within her heart.

She little knew it, but the earnest prayer she had prayed that morning for her son and her husband had been speedily answered.

Moodily wandering along the Embankment, the reaction of his determined speech to his father having set in, and feeling he was, after all, a beast to have made a scene before his mother, who had so much to put up with, Ralph was surprised to see the figure of his father himself walking along with stooping, dejected mien. He at once followed him, wondering where he was going to. Many hours had passed since breakfast, and Ralph was beginning to think he had better return home for his mother's sake, but he felt compelled to go after his father, and keeping a little distance between them, he passed on by Charing Cross, and climbed up the stairs leading to Waterloo Bridge. Then he stopped, for his father

had stopped too, and was leaning moodily over the side of the bridge.

If Ralph could have read his mind, he would have been unnerved, for the man was measuring the distance to the water, wishing himself in his soul-smart anywhere out of the way. His boy's words had got there.

Suddenly he felt a hand on his sleeve, and, looking round, he saw his boy's face gazing up at him nervously.

'Dad,' he said, 'I'm sorry about this morning, and I'll go back. Never mind the boys. I'll go back.'

His father straightened himself. 'Then so will I,' he said, and in a moment his son understood, and was aghast at his father's misery.

That was a close talk they had walking home that day. The barriers came down, and the father met his son on the level, and told the boy that he had made up his mind to never touch drink again. And the promise to the boy was kept. They moved from the neighborhood at once, but even had they stayed Ralph would never have had cause to be ashamed of his father again.

Physical Deterioration.

The Town Council of Gourock, the favorite Clyde-side resort, has fallen into line with the other cities and burghs which have so commendably warned their inhabitants of the evils attendant upon the use of alcoholic liquors. The following is a copy of the poster and circular that has been issued:—

BURGH OF GOUROCK.

Abuse of Alcohol.

With the unanimous approval of the Town Council, the Sanitary Committee desire, in the interest of the health of the community, to direct the attention of the public to the following statements, taken from the report to Parliament of the Committee on Physical Deterioration.

(1) The Abuse of Alcohol is a most powerful cause of Physical Deterioration.

(2) The habitual use of Alcohol weakens the health, and makes the body easily susceptible to Consumption and many other Diseases.

(3) Figures submitted to the Committee show that the Number of Cases of Insanity is increasing owing to the Abuse of Alcohol.

(4) Figures also show that the Death-Rate between the age of 25 and 65 years—the best working time in a man's life—is among users of alcohol nearly double that of total abstainers.

(5) The drinking habits of parents are very hurtful to their children, and predispose them to weak health and many fatal diseases. The Death-Rate among infants of drunken mothers is 2 1-2 times greater than among the children of sober mothers.

(6) Evidence shows that the abuse of Alcohol leads to the ruin of families, neglect of work, misery, vice and crime.

Sample Copies.

Any subscriber who would like to have specimen copies of the 'Northern Messenger' sent to friends can send the names with addresses and we will be pleased to supply them, free of cost. Sample copies of the 'Witness' and 'World Wide' will also be sent free on application.

OFFER WITHDRAWN.

Our free brooch offer has created much interest among 'Messenger' readers, and we beg to thank them for the names sent in of Sunday Schools not taking the 'Messenger.' We have faithfully kept our part of the agreement, and any sender who has not received either the brooch or a card of notification will know that this was because the information they sent was incomplete, and did not fulfil the conditions of the offer.

We will at any time be pleased to receive from our friends names of Sunday Schools not taking the 'Messenger,' but we must now recall the offer of a brooch free for this information, except in so far as this applies to rural schools in Saskatchewan, Alberta, or other parts of the West where the great influx of settlers causes Sunday Schools to spring up that can ill afford a great outlay for papers, yet that would most keenly appreciate the good Sunday reading contained in the 'Messenger.'

Any coupons mailed on or before date of this paper will be promptly honored, but from this date the offer is withdrawn.