

The Price of a Drink.

"Five cents a glass!" Does anyone think That that is really the price of a drink? "Five cents a glass," I heard you say; "Why that isn't very much to pay." Ah, no indeed, 'tis a very small sum, You are passing over 'twixt finger and thumb, And if that were all you gave away, It wouldn't be very much to pay.

The price of a drink let that one tell Who sleeps to-night in a murderer's cell And feels within him the fire of hell. Honour and virtue, love and truth, All the pride and glory of youth, Hopes of mankind, wealth of fame, High endeavour and noble aim,— These are the treasures thrown away For the price of a drink from day to day.

"Five cents a glass!" How Satan laughed As over the bar the young man quaffed The beaded liquor! for the demon knew The terrible work that drink would do. And before the morning the victim lay With his life blood ebbing swiftly away. And that was the price he paid, alas, For the pleasure of taking a social glass.

The price of a drink? If you want to know What some are willing to pay for it, go Through that wretched tenement over there, With dingy window and broken chair, Where foul disease like a vampire crawls With outstretched wings o'er the mouldy walls.

There poverty dwells with her hungry brood, Wild-eyed as demons, for lack of food; There shame, in a corner, crouches low; There violence deals its cruel blow. The innocent ones are thus accursed To pay the price of another's thirst.

Five cents a glass! Oh, if that were all, The sacrifice would indeed be small; But the money's worth is the least amount We pay, and whoever will keep account Will learn the terrible waste and blight That follows the ruinous appetite. Five cents a glass! Does anyone think That is really the price of a drink?

THE STORY OF JESSICA.

CHAPTER IX.

JESSICA'S FIRST PRAYER ANSWERED.

Every Sunday evening the barefooted and bareheaded child might be seen advancing confidently up to the chapel where rich and fashionable people worshipped God; but before taking her place she arrayed herself in a little cloak and bonnet, which had once belonged to the minister's elder daughter, and which was kept with Daniel's serge gown, so that she presented a somewhat more respectable appearance in the eyes of the congregation. The minister had no listener more attentive, and he would have missed the pinched, earnest little face if it were not to be seen in the seat just under the pulpit. At the close of each service he spoke to her for a minute or two in his vestry, often saying no more than a single sentence, for the day's labour had wearied him. The shilling, which was always lying upon the chimney-piece, placed there by Jane and Winny in turns, was immediately handed over, according to promise, to Daniel as she left the chapel, and so Jessica's breakfast was provided for her week after week.

But at last there came a Sunday evening when the minister, going up into his pulpit, did miss the wistful, hungry face, and the shilling lay unclaimed upon the vestry chimney-piece. Daniel looked out for her anxiously every morning, but no Jessica glided into his secluded corner, to sit beside him with her breakfast on her lap, and with a number of strange questions to ask. He felt her absence more keenly than he could have expected. The child was nothing to him, he kept saying to himself; and yet he felt that she was something, and that he could not help being uneasy and anxious about her. Why had he never inquired where she lived? The minister knew, and for a minute Daniel thought he would go and ask him, but that might awaken sus-

picion. How could he account for so much anxiety, when he was supposed only to know of her absence from chapel one Sunday evening? It would be running a risk, and, after all, Jessica was nothing to him. So he went home and locked over his savings-bank book, and found, to his satisfaction, that he had gathered together nearly four hundred pounds, and was adding more every week.

But when upon the next Sunday Jessica's seat was again empty, the anxiety of the solemn chapel-keeper overcame his prudence and his fears. The minister had retired to his vestry, and was standing with his arm resting upon the chimney-piece, with his eyes fixed upon the unclaimed shilling, which Winny had laid there before the service, when there was a tap at the door and Daniel entered with a respectful but hesitating air.

"Well, Standring?" said the minister, questioningly.

"Sir," he said, "I'm uncomfortable about that little girl, and I know you've been once to see after her; she told me about it; and so I make bold to ask you where she lives, and I'll see what's become of her."

"Right, Standring," answered the minister; "I'm troubled about the child, and so are my little girls. I thought of going myself, but my time is very much occupied just now."

"I'll go, sir," replied Daniel, promptly; and, after receiving the necessary information about Jessica's home, he put out the lights, locked the door, and turned towards his lonely lodgings.

But though it was getting late upon Sunday evening, and Jessica's home was a long way distant, Daniel found that his anxiety would not suffer him to return to his solitary room. It was of no use to reason with himself, as he stood at the corner of the street, feeling perplexed and troubled, and promising his conscience that he would go the very first thing in the morning after he shut up his coffee-stall. In the dim, dusky light, as the summer evening drew to a close, he fancied he could see Jessica's thin figure and wan face gliding on before him, and turning round from time to time to see if he were following. It was only fancy, and he laughed a little at himself; but the laugh was husky, and there was a choking sensation in his throat, so he buttoned his Sunday coat over his breast, where his silver watch and chain hung temptingly, and started off at a rapid pace for the centre of the city.

It was not quite dark when he reached the court, and stumbled up the narrow entry leading to it; but Daniel did hesitate when he opened the stable door, and looked into a blank, black space, in which he could discern nothing. He thought he had better retreat while he could do so safely, but, as he still stood with his hand upon the rusty latch, he heard a faint, small voice through the nicks of the unceiled boarding above his head.

"Our Father," said the little voice, "please to send somebody to me, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen."

"I'm here, Jess," cried Daniel, with a sudden bound of his heart, such as he had not felt for years, and which almost took away his breath as he peered into the darkness, until at last he discerned dimly the ladder which led up into the loft.

Very cautiously, but with an eagerness which surprised himself, he climbed up the creaking rounds of the ladder and entered the dismal room, where the child was lying in desolate darkness. Fortunately, he had put his box of matches into his pocket, and the end of a wax candle with which he kindled the lamps, and in another minute a gleam of light shone upon Jessica's white features. She was stretched upon a scanty litter of straw under the slanting roof where the tiles had not fallen off, with her poor rags for her only covering; but as her eyes looked up into Daniel's face bending over her, a bright smile of joy sparkled in them.

"Oh!" she cried, gladly, but in a feeble voice, "it's Mr. Dan'el! Has God told you to come here, Mr. Dan'el?"

"Yes," said Daniel, kneeling beside her, taking her wasted hand in his, and parting the matted hair upon her damp forehead.

"What did he say to you, Mr. Dan'el?" said Jessica.

"He told me I was a great sinner," re-

plied Daniel. "He told me I loved a little bit of dirty money better than a poor, friendless, helpless child, whom he had sent to me to see if I would do her a little good for his sake. He looked at me, or the minister did, through and through, and he said, 'Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?' And I could answer him nothing, Jess. He was come to a reckoning with me, and I could not say a word to him."

"Aren't you a good man, Mr. Dan'el?" whispered Jessica.

"No, I'm a wicked sinner," he cried, while the tears rolled down his solemn face. "I've been constant at God's house, but only to get money; I've been steady and industrious, but only to get money; and now God looks at me, and he says, 'Thou fool!' Oh, Jess! you're more fit for heaven than I ever was in my life."

"Why don't you ask him to make you good for Jesus Christ's sake?" asked the child.

"I can't," he said. "I've been kneeling down Sunday after Sunday when the minister's been praying, but all the time I was thinking how rich some of the carriage people were. I've been loving money and worshipping money all along, and I've nearly let you die rather than run the risk of losing part of my earnings. I'm a very sinful man."

"But you know what the minister often says," murmured Jessica. "'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'"

"I've heard it so often that I don't feel it," said Daniel. "I used to like to hear the minister say it, but now it goes in at one ear and out at the other. My heart is very hard, Jessica."

By the feeble glimmer of the candle Daniel saw Jessica's wistful eyes fixed upon him with a sad and loving glance; and then she lifted up her weak hand to her face, and laid it over her closed eyelids, and her feverish lips moved slowly. "God," she said, "please to make Mr. Dan'el's heart soft, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen."

She did not speak again, nor Daniel, for some time. He took off his Sunday coat and laid it over the tiny, shivering frame, which was shaking with cold even in the summer evening, and as he did so he remembered the words which the Lord says he will pronounce at the last day of reckoning, "Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Daniel Standring felt his heart turning with love to the Saviour, and he bowed his head upon his hands, and cried in the depths of his contrite spirit, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

(To be continued.)

THE LAST CHANCE.

On a part of the British coast, where beetling cliffs, from three to five hundred feet in height, overhang the ocean, some individuals during a certain season of the year, obtain a solitary livelihood by collecting the eggs of rock birds, and gathering samphire.

The way in which they pursue this hazardous calling is as follows: The man drives a crowbar securely into the ground about a yard from the edge of the precipice. To that crowbar he makes fast a rope, of which he then lays hold. He next slides gently over the cliff, and lowers himself till he reaches the ledges and crags where he expects to find the object of his pursuit. To gain these places is sometimes a difficult task, and when they fall within the perpendicular, the only method of accomplishing it is for the adventurer to swing in the air till, by dexterous management, he can so balance himself as to reach the spot on which he wishes to descend. A basket made for the purpose and strapped between the shoulders contains the fruit of his labours, and when he has filled the basket or failed in the attempt, he ascends hand over hand to the summit.

On one occasion a man who was thus employed in gaining a narrow ledge of rock, which was overhung by a higher portion of the cliff, secured his footing, but let go the rope. He at once perceived his peril. No one could come to his rescue, or even hear his cries. The fearful alternative flashed on his mind:

It was being starved to death or dashed to pieces 400 feet below.

On turning round he saw the rope he had quitted, but it was far away. As it swayed backwards and forwards its long vibrations testified the mighty efforts by which he had reached the deplorable predicament in which he stood. He looked at the rope in agony. He had gazed but a little while when he noticed that every movement was shorter than the one preceding, so that each time it came the nearest, as it was gradually subsiding to a point of rest, it was a little further off than it had been the time before. He briefly reasoned thus: That rope is my only chance. In a little while it will be forever beyond my reach; it is nearer now than it will ever be again; I can but die; here goes. So saying he sprang from the cliff as the rope was next approaching, caught it in his grasp, and went home rejoicing.

Sinner, you tremble at the thought, but yours is a greater danger. You stand on a narrow foot-hold, before you yawns the terrible precipice. But the rope is here. Salvation is set before you; it is as near, perhaps nearer, than it will ever be again. Lay hold of it, cling to it with the firmness of a death grasp! This is your only chance of safety, and it is not a chance alone; it is a glorious certainty, and the only danger is that refusing to embrace it, you will defer escape until it becomes impossible. Then make the decision now, and be raised to a place of peace and safety.

WHAT A PENNY DID.

A lady, who was a Sunday-school teacher, was engaged in filling up a box of things to be sent to a missionary in the interior of India. On Sunday morning she mentioned it to her class, and told them if they had anything they would like to put in the box, they might bring it to her house during the week, and she would put it in. One little girl in her class wanted very much to send something in the box, but all she had to give was a single penny. She knew that this would be of no use in India, as our money is not used there. She was at a loss for a while to know what to buy with her penny. At last she made up her mind to buy a tract. She did so, and prayed over it before it was sent. Then she took it to her teacher; it was put in the box, and the box was carried across the great ocean. It reached the missionary to whom it was sent. The wife of that missionary had a young chief from the mountains of Burma attending at her school. She taught him to read, and when the time came for him to leave and go to his distant home, she gave him some books and tracts to take with him. Among these was the very tract which that little girl had bought with her penny and put in her teacher's box. The young chief read that tract. It caused him to see the folly of his heathenism, and led him to Jesus. He went back to his mountain home a changed man—a Christian. That little girl's tract had saved his soul. But that was not all. When he reached home he told the story of Jesus, which he had learned from that tract, to his friends. They listened to what he said. God blessed his words. More came and heard him speak. They gave up worshipping idols. A missionary was sent there. A church was built, a congregation was gathered into it, and fifteen hundred persons became Christians in that neighbourhood.

Licensed.

- Licensed—to make the strong man weak;
- Licensed—to lay the wise man low;
- Licensed—a wife's fond heart to break,
- And cause the children's tears to flow.
- Licensed—to do thy neighbour harm;
- Licensed—to kindle hate and strife;
- Licensed—to nerve the robber's arm;
- Licensed—to whet the murderer's knife.
- Licensed—where peace and quiet dwell,
- To bring disease, and want, and woe;
- Licensed—to make the home a hell,
- And fit men for a hell below.

Easily Remedied.—"Say," said the city editor, "it seems to me that this expression of yours about 'showing a clean pair of heels' is not just the thing in a report of a bicycle race." "All right," answered the lazy reporter. "Just stick in a 'w,' and make it a clean pair of wheels."