

It was in the edge of a little country village, and the women were out at their doors looking at him, for he was a spectacle which could not fail to draw attention. He was staggering from one side of the road to the other, and was barely able to keep his legs. I returned soon by the same way, and found him near the place where I had met him lying close to the waggon-track, dead-drunk. It was very evident that his theory in regard to intoxicating liquors had not worked well in his own case. His taste for them had finally obtained the mastery over him. He inherited a comfortable fortune, and he has managed to retain the most of it till the present time notwithstanding his irregular habits. But he is no credit to himself nor his family. He still indulges in occasional sprees. He went lately to a neighboring town on business, and became so bewildered by drinking that he did not know his own horse. He insisted that another man's horse was his own, and drove him a mile out of town before he came to himself enough to discover his mistake.

THE SECOND YOUNG MAN.

When he was about twenty-one years of age his father was accidentally killed. Being the oldest son the management of affairs went chiefly to him. It was a hazardous time of life for him to become his own master. He was inclined to pleasure, to jollity, to indulge in cups that did him more harm than good; and so associated naturally with the looser members of society. He gradually wasted the little property which had fallen to him from his father's estate, and at the end of a few years found himself reduced to nothing. Since then he has secured a precarious living by doing small jobs of one kind or another as he could find them; or else by making himself an unwelcome guest in the houses of his friends. For years he had been more of a vagabond than an independent and honorable man. As a last resort he lately threw himself on the hands of a sister who keeps a boarding-house in a city near the place of his nativity. His sister is not able to bear the expense of supporting him, and some of her patrons have withdrawn from her table, because the presence of such a man was not agreeable to them.

THE THIRD YOUNG MAN.

He was an only son, was wealthy, sufficiently good-looking, and had a high social position. Almost any young lady in the neighborhood would have considered him a great matrimonial prize. But no one can predict what a young man will become who is not governed by religious principles, much less what one will become at last who loves an easy and merry life, and an occasional glass

of liquor. The girl who is foolish enough, or inconsiderate enough to marry a man of that kind runs a terrible risk. In regard to the one referred to a cloud settled at length over his social prospects, and he slid down to a low place in public esteem. His money grew less and less till he found himself in destitution. Then he drifted westward, where finally he was admitted to a city almshouse. At length some kind people had compassion on him, and raised money to help him back to his native county in the east. And there he is now, a charge on the public in the poor-house.

CONCLUSION.

As already appears, the three young men of whom I have been speaking are still living, but far advanced in years. If ever they seriously and candidly review the past, they cannot fail to see that their lives have been a miserable failure. One of them married and had several children, but not one of them I am sure, was ever proud of his father; while his wife, a poor, disappointed woman, has had a hard life of it. The other two have never married, a fortunate circumstance for a couple of girls who else might have been reduced to poverty and wretchedness.

You see in these cases, O young man, as you may have seen in many others, how dangerous it is to tamper with intoxicating drinks. The only safe course is to abstain entirely from them all. If you think you have will-power enough to control yourself so as not to go beyond the point of safety, you would do well to consider that this is the very delusion under which many have gone down to ruin; they thought themselves in no danger, till they suddenly found that they had already fallen. Then beware. Distrust yourself, for you are no stronger than many others who have gone down to dishonored graves. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

"A true Christian is the representative of Christ in the world—the only embodiment of gospel teaching and influence that is presented in human society. How vitally important is it, then, that those of us who profess and call ourselves Christians should make our Christianity attractive! Multitudes of people know very little, and think very little about the Lord Jesus; nearly all the ideas they get of his religion is what they see in those who profess it, and their eyes are as sharp as those of a lynx to discover whether neighbor is one whit the better for religion."