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SELECTIONS.

STORY OF A WICKED LIFE.

BY THE REV. CANON ELLISON, M.A.,  
CHAPLAIN TO THE QUEEN; CHAIRMAN OF C.E.T.S.

[In the year 1877, the body of a young man, about twenty years of age, was found in the Mersey, at Liverpool. He was well-dressed, evidently one of a well-to-do class. There was no clue to his identity, but in his pocket a paper was found with these words written on it:

"Let me rot!—I have good friends, have had good friends, but am now a miserable sinner—not a farthing. Everything has been done to make me a useful citizen of the world, but I have abused everybody's confidence. Let me perish! God be merciful to me a sinner! Nothing will be found on me to show who I am, but I might have been in a very comfortable position all the days of my life, if it were not for drink. This accursed stuff has led me to commit suicide."

The report of the inquest went the round of the press. In less than two months the coroner received more than 200 applications from parents in different parts of the country, asking for particulars—such as height, color of hair, etc.—200, that is, who had sons, lost to them, and to whom the description in the papers might have applied.]

"Let me rot!" 'tis all I'm fit for!  
Not in consecrated grave,  
Where Christian men, whom mourners weep for,

Their resting-place and burial have.  
But down amidst the silent waters,  
Dark and deep as my remorse,  
Away from wandering eyes, forgotten,  
Let me lie a nameless corpse.

"Let me rot!" 'Twas not so always!  
I was once a happy boy,  
Strong, courageous, hopeful, truthful,  
A father's pride, a mother's joy;  
And I had visions, like my playmates,  
Of a future yet to come,  
When I perchance should gather round me  
The blessings of a Christian home.

And I had friends:—one friend who gave me  
The love of her young trusting heart;  
Friends to help, and friends to save me,  
If I, poor fool! had done my part.  
Where are they now? All, all have left me,  
As, yielding to the cursed drink,  
Step by step it has bereft me  
Of prospects, reason, power to think.

"Let me perish! none will miss me,  
None will seek to know my end;  
No mother's lips would care to kiss me,  
No weeping eyes would o'er me bend,  
"Let me perish!" Friends are round me,  
Mocking, beckoning, urging on.  
They have tempted, fast have bound me,  
Now they claim me for their own.

"Let me rot!" but O, my brothers,  
You who hold your lives in hand,  
By your love for fathers, mothers,  
By your love for fatherland;  
By the Name of Him who bought you,  
And who now your service claims;  
By the holy book that taught you  
Not to live for selfish aims;

Up and drive the drink fiend from you,  
Dash his poison from your lip;  
Ye are freemen—free your country  
From his desolating grip.  
"Let me perish!"—but let others,  
Musing on this shipwrecked life,  
Take arms, and look for no discharges  
In their righteous, life-long strife.  
—C.E.T.S. Chronicle.

"YOU CAN'T COME IN, SIR."

If you would not be a drunkard  
You must not drink a drop;  
For if you never should begin  
You'll never have to stop.

The taste of drink, good people say,  
Is hard in driving out;  
Then, friends, in letting in that taste,  
Why! what are you about?

Out of your house to keep a thief,  
You shut your door and lock it,  
And hang the key upon a nail  
Or put it in your pocket.

So, lest King Rum within you should  
His horrid rule begin, sir,  
Just shut your lips and lock them tight,  
And say "You can't come in, sir."  
—Dominion Churchman.

TWO SCENES.

Beautiful night, the moon's clear light  
Streams in thro' casement fair;  
Wines ruddy glow and plenteous flow.  
In cut glass, rich and rare.  
A happy throng, glad bursts of song;  
Perfume of flowers sweet;  
A blushing bride, and at her side  
The tread of manly feet.

A still, cold night, the moon's pale light  
Shines down on ice and snow;  
Through trees so bare the frosty air  
Makes moaning sad and low.  
Requiem sung, in unknown tongue,  
O'er form so stiff and cold;  
An open grave its welcome gave  
A bed of frozen mold.  
An empty jug, a battered mug,  
Fetid lying side by side;  
They tell the tale of lips so pale,  
Tell how and why he died.  
—Marion A. Murphy, in the Advance

SIGNING THE FARM AWAY.

Fine old farm, for a hundred years  
Kept in the family name;  
Cornfields rich with golden ears  
Oft as the harvest came;  
Crowded barn and crowded bin,  
And still the loads came coming in  
Rolling in for a hundred years;  
And the fourth in the family line  
appears.  
Orchard covered the slopes of the hill;  
Cider—forty barrels they say  
Sure in season to come from the mill,  
To be tasted around Thanksgiving  
day;  
And they drank as they worked, and  
they drank as they ate,  
Winter and summer, early and late,  
Counting it as a great mishap  
To be found "without a barrel to tap."

But while the seasons crept along,  
And habits into passions grew,  
Their appetites became as strong  
As ever drunkard knew.  
And they labored less, and they  
squandered more,  
Chiefly for rum at a village store,  
Till called by the sheriff, one bitter  
day,  
To sign the homestead farm away.

Oh, many a scene have I met in life,  
—And many a call to pray;  
But the saddest of all was the drunkard's wife,  
Signing the farm away;

Home, once richest in the town,  
Home in that fatal cup poured down,  
Worse than fire or flood's dismay—  
Drunkard signing the farm away!  
—Rev. W. R. Cochrane, in Congregationalist.

THE DRUNKARD'S WIFE.

In a hospital ward a woman lay,  
Painfully gasping her life away.  
So bruised and beaten you scarce could trace,  
Womanhood's semblance in form or face,  
Yet the hair that covered the pillow,  
rolled  
In a tangled mass, was like threads of gold.  
And never sculptor in any land  
Moulded a daintier foot or hand.  
Said one who had ministered to her need:  
"None but a coward could do this deed;  
And what bitter hate must have nerved the arm  
That helpless creature like this could harm."  
Then the dim eyes, hazy with death's eclipse,  
Slowly unlocked, and the swollen lips  
Murmured faintly, "He loved me well—  
My husband—'twas drink—be sure you tell  
When he comes to himself, that I forgive,  
Poor fellow—for him I would like to live.  
A shadow, a moan, as the words were said,  
And the drunkard's wife on the couch lay dead.  
Oh, fathers, who hold your daughters dear,  
Somebody's daughter is lying here,  
Oh, brothers of sisters! come and see  
What the fate of your precious ones may be;  
Oh, men, however you love your home,  
Be it palace or cottage, 'neath heaven's blue dome,  
This demon of drink can enter in,  
For law strikes hands and bargains with sin."  
—Selected.

THE CAMP FIRE.

BY MRS. J. B. SHINGLEY, DORSET.  
Brightly gleams the Camp Fire's light,  
Like a beacon in the night,  
Sending forth its rays afar,  
Pure and bright as evening star;  
Guiding many a wanderer back  
From the perils of the track  
Leading to the rocks, that lie  
Hidden from the unwary eye;  
'E'en the treacherous rock of drink,  
Where so many strand and sink,  
Burying hope, and love and truth—  
Brightest promises of youth.  
Manhood too in all its pride,  
Sinks beneath the fatal tide.

Brightly may the CAMP FIRE burn;  
Fearing not the wrong to spurn;  
Fearing not to shed its light,  
Ever in the cause of right,  
May its rays reach far and wide,  
Spreading truth on every side,  
Till dark error, like the night,  
Flees before the morning light.

ONLY A SONG.

(Apropos Music in our Meetings.)

It was only a simple ballad  
Sung to the careless throng;  
There were none who knew the singer,  
And few that heeded the song;  
Yet the singer's voice was tender  
And sweet as with love untold:  
Surely those hearts were hardened  
That it left so proud and cold.

She sang of the wondrous glory  
That touches the woods in spring,  
Of the strange, soul-stirring voices  
When "the hills break forth and sing."  
Of the happy birds low warbling  
The requiem of the day,  
And the quiet hush of the valleys  
In the dusk of the gloaming grey.

And one in a distant corner—  
A woman worn with strife—  
Heard in that song a message  
From the spring-time of her life.  
Fair forms rose up before her  
From the midst of vanished years;  
She sat in a happy blindness,  
Her eyes were veiled in tears.

Then, when the song was ended,  
And hushed the last sweet tone,  
The listener rose up softly  
And went on her way alone.  
Once more to her life of labor  
She passed; but her heart was strong,  
And she prayed, "God bless the singer,  
And, oh! thank God for the song."  
—British Good Templar.

THE BLACK KNIGHT.



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