



Two Crushers.

(Mrs. Jennie Webber Lewis, in Michigan
'Christian Advocate'.)

After living for fifteen years near the quiet town of D—, we were suddenly called upon to move. Business interests made the change desirable, but leaving home and friends seemed almost like a sacrifice; and a feeling of sympathy for ministers and their wives grew within our hearts.

We arrived at our destination on one of those November days described by Longfellow, when 'The winds are never weary,' and the sun seemed to squint at us right through a mist of snowflakes. The only house or rooms we could secure were located midway between the crushers, which are the subject of this sketch.

From my back window I look out upon a rugged piece of land, where the earth seems to gape, and from its depths are quarried quantities of stone. The best are corded up for building purposes. The most, however, are loaded into cars, and drawn by cables up the incline track to the stone-crushers above, where the solid rock God has hidden in the depths of the earth is crushed into stone-dust.

While watching a score of men removing the layer of earth that covers the stone I listen for the warning whistle when the power of dynamite is manifested and the stone is shaken from its bed; and then, hearing the heaving of the engines and the grinding of the crushers, I look in wonder on the work of God and man.

From my front window I am compelled to look upon another crusher, a soul-crusher. Across the way are two buildings whose doors swing on their hinges almost as often as the cars from the stone-crushers slide up and down their track. Over the door of one I see a sign which seems to say, 'Come. When you have been bitten by the serpent, go, we care not where.' And over the door of the other I interpret the sign, 'Crusher for bodies and souls.' In front of these signs stands a noble tree, whose branches sigh and moan in the night wind like a dirge for the souls of victims. Though the branches of the old tree sigh in the wind and the rain drops in tears of pity from its leaves, across the trunk of this noble tree I read the words 'Wine and Beer.'

I think of another noble tree whose roots were grown in a strife for liberty, whose branches have sheltered the homeless of other lands, whose 'leaves are for the healing of a nation,' and whose tears fall over the graves of the drunkards, but across its trunk I read the words, 'License Rum,' and like the other tree its sign disgraces its sympathy.

Employed about the stone-crusher are scores of men, many of foreign birth, and whose loved ones are perchance still in the homeland across the sea. They are toiling day after day, or night after night in the intense cold of the winter, and while they toil the soul-crushers are preparing their cables to draw them in. One offers them hot soup at the noon and midnight hour, and music while they wait. The other has instituted a free barber chair and a graphophone to entertain them.

Are these inducements offered to the cold, hungry toilers because they love them? Ah, remember the stone cannot be crushed till the cable draws it to the crusher. These men are caught by the cable of temptation and carried on to these soul-crushers, where hopes are blasted, health is shaken and the soul is crushed till it is as the dust from the rock of true manhood.

How long must this be?

The Harm Slang Does.

There is still another serious objection to the use of slang. It tends to limit the vocabulary of him who uses it. Now, a limited vocabulary is almost as inconvenient at times as a limited purse, and it is far more inelegant. If there was practically limitless wealth within the reach of him who was minded to take it, it would argue a certain stupidity in any one who declined to avail himself of the supply. The same assertion holds true with regard to him who is willing to limit his choice of words. There is even more to be said than that. There is a limitless wealth of words at our disposal, but the most of us are too stupid to make use of them.

There are about two hundred thousand words in the English language. The average educated person is able in reading to understand perhaps twenty-five thousand words, but the most of us who write and speak limit ourselves to about five hundred or six hundred. Indeed, there is a vast number of fairly intelligent people, or people who pass as fairly intelligent, whose working vocabularies do not comprise more than three or four hundred words each.—Adeline Knapp, in the 'Household.'

Tobacco and Growing.

From D. Gordon Stables, in a little sketch called 'The Boy Who Did, and the Boy Who Didn't,' we have the following helpful information:

'Was I near dead, sir?'

'Pretty nigh. You see, you've got a touch of tobacco-heart.'

'Wotever's that?' said Joe. 'You don't mean for to say as 'ow cigarettes can 'urt a young chap?'

'But I do mean that, my boy. And I'm not likely to tell you a lie, or anybody else. There's a graveyard not a hundred miles from here that needn't have been dug had the boys that fill it kept away from cigarettes. No, the smoking didn't kill them right away. It just weakened them, and so when they fell ill of ordinary complaints, they had not the strength to get over them. But, lad, they're far better dead. They would have grown up poor, weak sillies, and never real men, happy and strong athletes.'

'Doss tobacco stop your growing, doc?'

'My boy! What a question to ask? Cigarette-smoking makes the heart weak and flabby, and so it is not able to pump sufficient blood to strengthen the bones and flesh and make them grow; and the blood it does supply is watery trash. You, yourself, Joe, are as white as a haddock and as soft in flesh, too. You'll never be a man.'

'But, doc, I'll stop smoking; 'ere's my 'and, doc, I will!' And he did.—Exchange.

Saved by Prayer.

'Good-bye, Harry; remember that mamma will always pray for your safety.'

These were the last words Harry heard as he went out of the gate toward the railway station to take the train for New York. The words kept ringing in his ears as the train passed rapidly out of the village, and new scenes came to his view. At the station in New York City his uncle was waiting for him.

In a few days Harry was at work in the new, grand store of his uncle. There he became acquainted with young men of his own age who seemed friendly, invited him to join in their excursion parties in the evening, and visit them at their homes. Before the first week was ended he had visited three of the boys of the city and taken a trip over to Jersey City, where several other boys took a trip on their bicycles. Harry had brought his wheel with him, and enjoyed the trip over the new country very much.

After they had gone a distance, they all stopped for refreshments, and he soon found himself standing at a bar in a saloon.

'What will you have, Harry?' he heard one of his new friends inquiring.

'I'll take a glass of lemonade, if you please,' answered Harry.

'Pretty good joke, Harry; but you don't get such stuff here; we are all going to have beer; I'll order one for you, too.' And before he could think of an answer, the bartender had placed it before him.

Harry felt a lump in his throat, but with a fixed determination answered:

'No, I do not drink.'

'Pshaw!' exclaimed one of the young men, 'you are not temperance, are you?'

'A glass of beer cannot hurt you; it is healthful,' said another.

'I promised mother,' replied Harry, 'that I would not drink anything that might make a drunkard of me, and if I never begin, I shall never have to stop; no one has ever become a drunkard who refused the first glass; and there are many drunkards who meant to stop after they had tasted beer or liquor "just once"; no, I shall not drink.'

It was a long speech for Harry to make, but he thought of his mother's prayer, and resolved that she should not pray in vain. He expected the boys to ridicule his remarks. When Tom Ankers, the young man who had worked next to him at the store, therefore took him by the hand, and with emotion said: 'Thank you, Harry; my mother used to tell me the same thing; she thinks her boy has never brought the intoxicating cup to his lips; I promise you that from to-night on I shall try to keep it,' it surprised Harry greatly.

But his surprise increased when one of the other young men came forward and said: 'I promised my present employer that I would never again enter a saloon to drink, when he saw me in one the last time, and he told me he could not keep young men in his employ who were addicted to the drink habit. I wanted to keep my promise, but always was afraid to refuse when in the company of the others.'

'Boys,' said Adam Wagner, 'this is the first time I ever took a drink. My father died a drunkard, and I have often heard him say that the first glass was the opening of a life of misery. He often asked me to leave all intoxicating drinks alone; I mean to do so after to-day, and you fellows must help me to keep my promise.'

'We shall, we shall,' replied his friends immediately.

'But tell us, Harry,' said the young man who had spoken after Tom; 'how was it possible for you to refuse? Didn't you expect us all to laugh at your remarks? What gave you such courage in this hour of danger?'

Harry told them the story in his simple, truthful manner, concluding with the words:

'Boys, my mother's prayers saved me.'

'Harry,' said Adam, 'when you write home again tell your mother about the occurrence this evening, and be sure and say that we were saved by her prayer.—New York 'Observer.'

Which Boy?

'Which of your boys, the heaven of your heart and life, will you give in order that your city may be lighted with gas or brilliant with electric light? Which child can you spare to help your city grade and pave its streets? How long will you consent to tread on sidewalks that the blood of souls has enabled your city to lay for your convenience? Which one?'

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