

We have had drunkards, who have lived here all their lives, so I don't see why Ashur Lang ought to bear the blame of these two."

"I can tell you, Betsy Thorndike—and it don't make any difference with him that possibly Robert and Henry might have taken to drinking here at home. They began with beer in his brewery, and it is likely they will end with the poorest of whisky, unless Providence interposes to save them. I haven't forgotten that Ashur is your mother's cousin, but I am going to speak my mind about him all the same. He can afford to be generous with money that has cost him nothing."

"Ashur attends to his business as regular as any other man."

"I didn't say anything about that; but he makes large profits over and above a fair return for all he has invested—profit for the maker and seller, but loss for the drinker."

"There ain't anybody obliged to buy his beer. He would stop making it if there was no market for it."

"There ain't anybody obliged to buy old Fontlin's whisky either. Folks that know better about it than I do say he makes it, but you think he ought to be punished for selling the stuff."

"Old Fontlin is not to be compared to Ashur Lang. He is a coarse, low fellow, who cares for nothing but to get what money he can out of his customers."

"And will you tell me what else Ashur Lang cares, so far as his business is concerned?"

"He don't make or sell whiskey."

"No, he makes and sells beer, an unsatisfying drink that whets a man's appetite for something stronger. It is made and sold for the sake of the money people are foolish enough to pay for it."

"But, Prissy, they who know more about it than you or I do say it is a good temperance drink. A good many folks won't be satisfied with tea and coffee, and beer comes in as just what they want to keep them from taking anything worse."

"You have been reading the papers Ashur sends to enlighten us poor, ignorant souls. That is the way men like him try to bolster themselves up. When he started out to seek his fortune he said he was going to make money the quickest and easiest way he could without being dishonest. To my mind he is doing a dishonest business every day. He is doing all he can to cheat hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of poor women and children out of the bare comforts of life. Why don't he make cloth, or boots and shoes, or something else people really need?"

"That would be pretty slow business for him. It would be coming down a good deal."

"It would be coming down on his profits. They say his wife dresses in silks and velvets, but the wife of the poor man who drinks his beer every day is fortunate if she gets a decent print."

"Some women drink beer."

"I know they do, and it is so much the worse for them. It is vile stuff at the best."

"You are dreadfully stirred up about it."

"Yes, I am. I have been reading and thinking on the beer question, especially since folks have begun to praise Ashur Lang so much. How much better man is he than Deacon Clement was?"

"Why, Deacon Clement was one of the most consistent Christians there ever was in town, and I don't suppose Ashur Lang makes any pretension to having religion."

"I don't suppose he does, either, and if he did it would be only pretension. Deacon Clement worked hard all his life, and helped everybody he could. He did a good deal folks never knew about, except the ones he helped. If it hadn't been for him the meeting-house would have been closed more than half the time; and, after all, he didn't get a tenth part of the praise Ashur Lang has. I don't believe he ever did an injury to any living being. He followed the example of his Master. He might have been rich if he had taken the advantage when he had a chance too."

"I suppose he might."

"Yes, and had money enough to cover up his sins, as far as this world is concerned. It is my opinion that is what Ashur Lang is trying to do; but he can't carry it into another world. If he wants to make any restitution for the hurt he has done let him provide for Henry Star's mother. Poor woman! she spent all she had trying to save her boy, and now in her old age she must go to the poor-house for a home, unless somebody interferes to prevent it."

"Ashur Lang can't support all the old women whose sons have drunk his beer; not but what I am sorry for Mrs. Star, and willing to do my part towards helping her."

"You are right, Betsy Thorndike. Ashur Lang cannot undo the wrong he has done, and that makes it all the worse for him. It is safe to calculate that for every dollar of profit he has made on his beer somebody has missed at least half a dollar's worth of comfort—all because he was determined to be rich, no matter who else is poor. Such a man is not deserving honor from his own townsmen. Ten thousand dollars don't count for much beside two such men as Robert Dennis and Henry Star bid fair to be, and the town lost them through his influence. I don't hate him, but I do hate his business and his beer."—*Nat. Temp. Advocate.*

Girls and Boys.

BANDS OF HOPE.

Dedicated, by the sanction of Her Majesty, to the grandchildren of the Queen.

God bless the conquering Bands of Hope!

God bless

The young first fruits of righteousness!

God bless

The men and women good, who lead them!

God bless

All soldiers of the glorious bands

God bless

The conquering troops of many lands!

Those who love God will pray "God speed" them!

We are Bands of Hope! Come hear our song,

And join us in the song we raise:

A song of mingled love and praise:

While gleefully we march along:

In faith, in health, in vigor, strong.

We are Bands of Hope—young girls and boys!

Who bid you share their simple joys.

We drank pure water from the spring;

We touch no vile accursed drink;

And children, though we be, we think.

Good angels hear the song we sing.

Armed for the certain war of life,

We dread no danger in the strife:

No foes with whom we cannot cope—

We—soldiers in the Band of Hope.

We are the Future! we who thus

Are strengthened as our lives begin,

Avoiding all the ways of sin:

Good men and women helping us.

Our pastors teach the holy plan—

That love of God is love of man.

We Bands of Hope, we march along,

While angels hear and join our song!

—S. C. Hall.

THE BEGINNING AND THE END.

The beginning was in this wise: A young man came to visit a friend in the city. This young man was from a quiet little country town where no such "modern improvements" as saloons were tolerated. He knew but little of the terrible work whisky is doing in the land. As he and his friend went down the city street together his friend said to him:

"Let's go in here and have a drink of something."

Now, though this young man knew but little of the effects of liquor-drinking from personal observation, he had been brought up by parents who had striven to impress upon his mind the fact that the man who tampers with strong drink is not safe. "Shun the bowl," they had often said to him. But he forgot, or perhaps it would be more in accord with the truth to say he ignored, the good advice of his parents, and he went into a saloon with his friend, and there he took his first drink of liquor.

When his friend had "treated" him, he felt somehow under a sort of obligation to "treat back," and the result was that two glasses of strong liquor made him drunk.

He was ashamed of himself when he became sober, and tried to quiet his conscience by saying to it that "it was only for this once, and he couldn't have refused without giving offence." He felt miserable the next day, and his friend advised him to take another drink—"that would straighten him up, men who drink always did that." So he drank again, and something about drinking fascinated him. Like many other men, he had an inherent appetite for strong drink, and this first experience with the terrible thing aroused it. He drank often after that while he was in the city. He could not go past a saloon without feeling a desire to go in.

He went back home. The desire for drink went with him. Shortly afterwards he left home, and went out into the world to make his fortune.