

"Playing Drunk."

JONES was a kind, good-natured man as one might wish to see;
He had a buxom, tidy wife and bright-eyed children three;
But Jones was weak in one respect—he had a love for rum,
And often from the drinking shop would staggering homeward come.

His good wife grieved to see him thus, but bore all patiently,
And prayed and hoped that in some way he would reformed be;
She never wavered in her faith, but toiled with hand or brain,
And in the end with joy she found her prayers were not in vain.

Thus it occurred—one Sunday morn, while Jones lay on the floor
Sleeping away the outcome of his spree the night before,
His wife had gone to church to pray that his reform might come,
Leaving, with much regret, her ill-clad little ones at home.

When passed away the lethargy caused by the flowing bowl,
Jones gazed around and saw a sight which shocked his very soul:
His eldest child, a boy of six, with frowzy, unkempt hair,
Was staggering around the room with idiotic stare.
The while his other little ones laughed loudly in their glee,
His grimaces and flounderings and antics queer to see.

"I'm only playing drunk," he said—"to imitate papa,
But if I had some liquor I could do it better far.
But children ain't allowed to drink, so I know what I will do,
I'll wait till I grow up, and then I'll be a drunkard too."

"I reckon not"—Jones muttered—"with Heaven's help I'll try
To do my duty after this in strict sobriety.
My eye shall ne'er again behold a scene so sad as this—
Come here, my precious little ones, and give papa a kiss!"

When Mrs. Jones came home from church he met her at the door,
And tenderly embracing her, said, "Wife, I'll drink no more!"
She saw the truth shine in his eyes and wept for very joy,
But never knew the change was wrought by her unthinking boy.

BESSIE'S MESSAGE.

BESSIE'S bright face wore an unusually serious, thoughtful expression, as she sat by the open window one bright spring morning with her Bible in her hand, while her eyes rested on the blue sky.

The words of a hymn she had sung yesterday in Sunday-school came into her mind, and, though she had sung them many and many a time before, yet until now she had never realized that it was a songful prayer she had uttered:

"Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages for thee"

Yes, her lips belonged to Jesus, for had she not given her whole heart and life to him?

Only a few weeks ago she had publicly professed her allegiance to her new Master and become one of his fol-

lowers, and her heart was so full of love that she longed to find some service in which to engage for him.

There was something she had never thought of doing, and yet it was so simple a duty that she wondered how she had neglected it so long. She had never spoken a word for Jesus since she had become a Christian; she had not asked any of her friends to come and share with her the happiness she found in his love.

"I will do it now, though," she said to herself. "This very day I will take a message to some one; and, when she knelt down for her morning prayer, she prayed very earnestly that God would give her wisdom and strength to speak a word for him in such a way that it might do some good.

That afternoon an opportunity came to her to deliver a message. She had enjoyed a delightful canter along the shady riverside road on her pony Shag, when she overtook her cousin Bert walking in the same direction in which she was going. Bert was her favourite cousin, and she was glad to see him, for this was the last day of his vacation, and he was going back to school on the morrow.

Shag was quite tired enough after his long canter to be very willing to sober down to a slow pace, and Bert had no difficulty in keeping up as he walked beside his pretty little cousin, for whom he had a great affection.

For some time they talked pleasantly together about the events that had occurred during Bert's vacation, and the plans he had made for the long summer holidays; then for a few moments they were both silent. Suddenly the thought flashed into Bessie's mind: "Here, now, is a good chance to speak your message. You have never told Bert anything about the happiness of your Christian life. Speak to him now."

But do you wonder that Bessie's face flushed crimson at the mere thought? How could she speak to mischievous, fun-loving Bert about anything so sacred as her love for Jesus! Oh, she could not—surely she could not—and she tried to banish the troublesome thought.

But then another thought came. She had not asked God to let her choose to whom she should carry a message for him, and perhaps he wanted to send one to Bert by the lips she had consecrated to his use. This thought unsealed her lips, and, with a swift little petition for help, she spoke quickly, lest her resolution should fail:

"Bert, I wish you were a Christian. I have been so happy since I learned to love Jesus, and I want you to know and love him too."

Bert knew what an effort the words cost his little cousin, for her voice trembled as she spoke. He was silent, however, for a few moments, partly from surprise and partly from another emotion.

As Bessie turned to look at him, fearing that he was vexed, he answered,

"Thank you for thinking about me, Bess. I didn't know before that anybody but ministers cared enough what became of people to say a word to them. I'll think about it."

So it had not been so hard after all, to speak for Jesus, and Bert had been neither amused nor offended, but had promised to think about it, and Bessie's heart was light at the remembrance of his earnest tones. She often wondered about her cousin, and she remembered him every day in her prayers, but not till the long summer vacation came did she know what work her message for the Master had accomplished. Bert himself told her the night he came home:

"Bessie dear, I want to thank you for what you said to me that day. It set me to thinking, and I thought there must be something real in your love for Jesus when you were so anxious for me to share it. I love him too now, and I mean to speak for him whenever I find an opportunity, that I may do for some one else what you have done for me."

Was not Bessie repaid for her effort?
—Minnie E. Kenney.

A BAD TEMPER CURED.

"I SHOULD like to tell you my case," said a tall, fine-looking, gentlemanly man, with a bright, beaming countenance. I had been speaking at a meeting in a large provincial town, on the mighty power of divine grace as all sufficient to save and deliver from the habit of besetting sins. At the close of the meeting this gentleman accosted me, as above, and added: "I keep a school, and for years my temper was sadly tried by my boys. Believing, as I trust, I am, a converted man and a professing follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, I felt that by giving way to my temper I was dishonouring my Lord and Master. This was a sad grief to me. It was a bad example for my boys, and I knew it must mar my influence with them.

"I struggled against it. I made it a subject of earnest prayer. Night after night I confessed my sin and sought strength to overcome it, but all in vain. I then wrote down and kept on my desk a memorandum of my transgressions, hoping that the constant sight of the reminder of my sins might serve as a check and cure, but still in vain. The outburst of temper broke over all barriers. Again and again I confessed and wept over my sad and sinful habit. I was injuring my own soul, and dishonouring my Lord in the presence of the whole school. This state of things went on for weeks and months. I knew not what to do. All my efforts were fruitless; all my good resolutions were broken. I was at length so driven to utter self-despair as regarded this matter, that one night I fell upon my knees and cried unto the Lord, and said, 'It is no use, Lord, I give it up; undertake it for me.'

"It is now five years ago this happened. The Lord *did* undertake for me; he did for me what I could not do for myself. Since that time I have never once been out of temper with my boys, nor have I once felt the inclination to be so. I thought you would like to have your words confirmed by this account of my experience." Such was, in substance, the language of the speaker.

OUR MINISTERS USE IT.

A YOUNG lady of ——— has had a number of lads in her Sabbath-school class in whose welfare she is greatly interested. One Sabbath she thought it necessary to speak to them of the evils which result from the use of tobacco. While she was advising them never to indulge in the filthy, disgusting habit, the pastor of the church, Rev. Dr. ———, whom the youth had been taught to look up to as an example of purity and Christian manliness, walked down the aisle, and to her chagrin stopped before the heater and disgorged into the coal-scuttle a great quid of tobacco, followed by a profuse expectoration of tobacco juice!

The act had been done so near the class that the members could not help but see it. The boys looked quizzically at each other. The blushing teacher looked at the boys, when one of them, pointing towards the scuttle, exultantly exclaimed, "Why, teacher, where's the harm? Our minister uses it!"

Many faithful and anxious mothers teach their boys that tobacco often creates a craving for strong drink, that it enfeebles the body and weakens the mind, that it takes needed comforts from the homes of the poorer class, that it is a curse to the young, and a plague to the aged, who so become its slaves that they are unwilling to give it up, although their hands tremble, their heads whirl, and every throeb of their "tobacco heart" is an annoyance.

The boy has learned from his mother all about these fearful effects, from which she would save him, but how often is her teaching in vain! For—"Our minister uses it!"—and the boy thinks "Mother has made a mistake! where is the harm?"

Ministers exert a mighty influence over the habits of the youth. If then the mouth of the watchman on Zion's walls be unclean, what will be the effect upon the youth who are so unfortunate as to sit under the preaching of such a watchman?

Said another, "I dread to take my boys to church with me, and therefore send them to a different place of worship. Our minister is an able man, but such an inveterate tobacco chewer that I would not like my sons to follow his example.

Tobacco and alcohol are twin curses. Neither of them should be tolerated—
Christian Instructor.

He who seeks only for applause from without has all his happiness in another's keeping.