

Turn It Down, Boys.

BY REV. EDWARD A. RAND.

If urged to lift the glass that tempts,  
In city grand or humble town,  
Be he that tempts the king or czar,  
Quick, turn your glass and set it down!

If those that ask you vex and tease,  
Perhaps condemn you with a frown,  
Be firm, mind not the laugh and sneer,  
Quick, turn your glass and set it down!

If health you crave and strength of arm,  
Would keep your hairy brows of brow,  
Nor have the scarlet flush of sin,  
Quick, turn your glass and set it down!

If in your trouble others say,  
"In sea of drink your sorrows drown,"  
Look out lest drown the drinker be!  
Quick, turn your glass and set it down!

Cold water, boys! hurrah, hurrah,  
Will help to health, wealth and renown;  
If urged to give their treasures up,  
Quick, turn your glass and set it down!

few persons took the trouble to find him work to do. It was much easier to take a penny out of the purse, drop it into his hand, and pass on, with a feeling of satisfaction of at once getting rid of a painful object, and of appeasing the conscience, which seemed about to demand that some remedy be found for wretched poverty who has probably it did not occur to any of these well-meaning and charitable persons that they were aiding and encouraging the poor lad to break out of the laws of the country.

Whilst it was still day, though the sun was sinking in the sky, David sat down under a hedge to count over his heavy load of peace, which threatened to be too weighty for his ragged pockets. He had now five shillings' worth of copper, and he did not know where to exchange them for silver. He placed his old cap between his feet, and dropped in the coins one after another, handling them with an almost wild delight. How rich he would be to go home to his mother, if he had equal luck on his way back! Five shillings for two days' begging! Now that he had found out how easy and profitable it was, and how little risk attended it if you only kept out of sight of the police, his mother and sisters should never know what again. He felt very joyous, and his joy found vent in clear, shrill whistling of the times he had learned from street-organs. He was whistling through the merriest song he knew, when a hand was laid heavily on his shoulder, and, looking up, he saw the familiar uniform of a policeman.

"You're in fine spirits, my lad," he said. "What's this you're crowing over, eh? Where did you get all those coppers in your cap? How did you come by them, eh?"

David could not speak, though he tried to seize and hide away his gains; but in vain. The policeman picked up his cap, and weighed it in his hand.

"You've been begging on the roads," he said, in a matter-of-course manner, "and you must come along with me. We'll give you a night's lodging for nothing, I promise you. We must put a stop to this sort of thing."

Still David neither moved nor spoke. This an idea reversal of all his gladness and prospects paralyzed him. He had known all the while that any policeman had the power to take him up for begging, and lock him for the night in a police-cell; and charge him with his offence before a magistrate. Not a few of his acquaintances had been in jail, and they mostly said it was for begging. The thought of his mother fretting and longing for him at home, and the grief and terror she would feel if he did not get back on Saturday night, as he had promised, flashed across him. The policeman was busy counting over the heap of coppers, and David saw his chance, and seized it. He sprang to his feet, and fled away with his fast steps as if he had been fleeing for his life.

But it was of no avail to try to escape from the strong and swift policeman, who instantly pursued him. David was weak and tired, and could not have run far if it had been for his life. He felt himself caught firmly by the collar, and shaken, whilst two or three passers-by stood still, witnessing his capture.

"You young rascal!" said the policeman, "you're only making it all the worse for yourself. Here's five shillings and more in his cap," he went on, addressing the bystanders; "and I'll be bound he's been begging along the roads as if he hadn't a farthing. That's how the public is imposed on. Five shillings! and I don't earn more than four shillings a day. There's a shame for you!"

"Ay, it is a shame!" echoed one of the spectators, "a big lad of his age, that ought to be at honest work, earning his own bread!"

"Nobody's ever taught me how to work!" sobbed David, standing bewildered and ashamed, the centre of the gathering crowd.

"We'll teach you that in jail, my fine fellow," said the policeman, marching him off, followed by a train of rough lads, which grew larger and noisier until they reached the police-station, and David was led in out of their sight.

It was a dreary night for David. There was no bed in the cell, and no food was given to him. In his anxiety to save all he could to carry home with him, he had not tasted a morsel since morning; and his meal then had been nothing but a pennyworth of bread, which he had taken reluctantly from his treasure. He had been thinking of buying his supper, and what it would cost him, when his gains had been seized from him, and handed over to the custody of the police-superintendent. He was weary too, topt sore, and worn out with his long tramp.

But neither his hunger nor fatigue pressed upon him with most bitterness. He crouched down in a corner of the cell, and thought of his mother and sisters looking out for him all Saturday, and waiting, and watching, and listening for him to open the door, and never seeing him at all! His mother had said who would be hungrier for a sight of him than for bread! Would they send him to jail for

begging? Boys had been sent there for three days or a week, and his mother would be fretting all that time. He would lose his money too, and go home as penniless as he left it. He hid his face in his hands, and wept bitterly till his tears were exhausted, and a raging headache followed. At times he slumbered a little, sobbing heavily in his short and troubled sleep. When he woke he felt the pang of hunger sharper than usual; for he had been nearly a night and a day without eating food, and his hunger made him think again of his mother. Hungry, weary, and bewildered, with an aching head and a heart full of care and bitterness, David passed through the long and weary hours of the night.

It was after mid day before food was provided for him, and then he could not eat it. He felt sick with dread of the moment when he should be taken before the magistrate. He had seen other prisoners summoned and led away to receive their doom; but his turn seemed long in coming. At last it came. He obeyed the call of his name, and found himself, dizzy-headed and sick at heart, standing in a large room, with a policeman beside him. There was a singing in his ears, through which he listened to the charge made against him, and to the policeman in the witness-box giving his evidence.

"Have you anything to say for yourself?" asked a voice in front of him; and David raised his dim eyes to the face of the magistrate, but did not answer, though his lips moved a little.

"Were you begging?" asked the magistrate. "Yes," answered David with a slight effort; "but I am not a thief, sir: I never stole a farthing."

"Is there any previous charge against this boy?" inquired the magistrate.

A second policeman stepped into the witness-box, and David turned his dazed eyes upon him. He had never seen him before.

"I have a previous charge of stealing iron against the prisoner."

"It's not true!" cried out David in a voice shrill with terror. "I never was a thief. Somebody ask my mother."

"Silence!" cried the officer who had him in charge, with a sharp grip of his arm. "You must not interrupt the court."

"He was convicted of theft before your worship six months ago," pursued the policeman in the box, taking no notice of David's interruption. "He went then by the name of John Kenyon, and was sentenced to twenty-one days."

"Have you anything more to say?" asked the magistrate, looking again at David.

"It wasn't me!" he answered vehemently. "He's mistook me for some other boy. I never stole nothing, and I never begged afore. You ask my mother. Oh, what will become of my mother and little boys?"

"You should have thought of your mother before you broke the laws of your country," said the magistrate. "This neighbourhood is infested with beggars, and we must put a stop to the nuisance. I shall send you to jail for three calendar months, when you will be taught a trade by which you may earn an honest livelihood."

David was hustled away, and another case called. His had occupied scarcely four minutes. The day was a busy one, as there had been a large fair held in the district; and there was no more time to be spent upon a boy clearly guilty of begging, and who had been convicted of theft. No one doubted for a moment this latter statement, or thought it in the least necessary to inquire if the boy's vehement denial had any truth in it. Another prisoner stood at the bar, and David fell was at once forgotten.

It seemed to David as if he had been and dently struck dead. No other sound reached his brain after he heard the words, "To jail for three months." Three months in jail! Not to see his mother for three months! Perhaps never to see her again; for who could tell that she would live for three months? It was only a few minutes since he heard his name called out before he was hurried into court; but it might have been many years. He felt as if his mother might have been dead long ago; as if it was very long ago since he left home, with her voice sounding in his ears. He seemed to hear her saying, "God bless you, David!" and the magistrate's voice directly following it, "I shall send you to jail for three months." His bewildered brain kept repeating, "God bless you, Davy! I shall send you to jail for three months." It was as if some one was mocking him with these words.

(To be continued.)

"And you say Bill is no longer here?" said the visitor to a small Western town. "That's what I said." But I understood that he was one of your leading citizens. "So he was. That's how we come to lose him. One night we found him leading the wrong horse."

WANTED—A STRONG BOY.

So read a sign in a store window as we passed by the other morning. At noon it was gone, presumably because the boy had come. The placard, however, had done more than accomplish its direct object. It set us thinking. "Wanted—a strong boy." In how many places that legend might be truthfully displayed! The world wants boys that are strong, first of all, in body. A stomach fed chiefly on cakes and pasties, and a nervous system undermined by the deadly cigarette, make a poor basis for stout, fleet limbs and sturdy arms. Other things being equal, a merchant or lawyer wants a boy who can pull a strong oar, or make his horse run on the ball field, and keep his wind in a half mile run. Other things being equal—what other things? Certain ones that are the real measures of strength, whether in boys or men. Has he grit? Can he stick to a thing? Is he quick to take in a situation, ready in an emergency. Bright-witted where others blunder? Is he equal to responsibility? Can he be left with a given task with a certainty that he can do literally left with it, and his employer find it fully done in due season, without a second of intervening anxiety or oversight? These are some of the elements of strength that make up the model "strong boy" who is universally wanted to-day.

But is this all? We think not. If we were gauging the real power of a boy for such a position as has been described, we should wish to know something more than the size of his biceps and the tenacity of his grip on a given bit of work. We should want to know about the strength of his love for that father and mother who have sacrificed so much for his advancement. We should look for some indication of a tie binding him to the house of God as a regular, thoughtful attendant. We should inquire as to the connecting links in his life between his daily conduct and the Word of God. Has he come into an earnest, loyal relation to Jesus Christ, as his Saviour and Master? Is he "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might?"

Yes, there is a great demand for strong boys. Satan wants them that he may rob them of their present and prospective vigor. Christ wants them, that through their youthful robustness the weak places in his army may be reinforced. The Church of to-day, as well as commercial corporations, may well hang out the sign in unmistakable characters, and keep it displayed, "Wanted—strong boys!"

THE POWER OF HABIT.

There is the forming time of habits and these, unless carefully watched, will grow until they bind like ropes and handcuffs. There are few young men who are awakened to the evils of a bad habit in time to conquer, as did a certain young man who had thoughtlessly formed the habit of taking a glass of liquor every morning before breakfast.

An older friend advised him to quit before the habit should grow too strong. "Oh, there's no danger, it's a mere notion. I can quit at any time," replied the drinker.

"Suppose you try it to-morrow morning," suggested the friend.

"Very well; to please you I'll do so, but I assure you there's no cause for alarm."

A week later the young man met his friend again.

"You are not looking well" observed the latter, "have you been ill?"

"Hardly," replied the other one. "But I am trying to escape a dreadful danger, and I fear it will be long before I have conquered. My eyes were opened to an imminent peril when I gave you that promise a week ago. I thank you for your timely suggestion."

"How did it affect you?" inquired the friend.

The first trial utterly deprived me of appetite for food. I could eat no breakfast, and was nervous and trembling all day. I was alarmed when I realized how madly the habit had fastened on me, and resolved to turn square work and never touch another drop. The square work has pulled me down, but I am gaining, and I mean to keep the upper end after this. Strong drink will never catch me in his net again."