

The Message of the Flowers.

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

Spoke full well, in language quaint and olden,
 One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine,
 When he called the flowers, so blue and golden,
 Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine.
 Stars are they, wherein we read our history,
 As astrologers and seers of old,
 Yet not wrapped about with awful mystery,
 Like the burning stars, which they behold.
 Wondrous truths, and manifold as wonders,
 God has written in those stars above;
 But not less in the bright flowerets under us
 Stands the revelation of his love.
 Bright and glorious is that revelation,
 Written all over this great world of ours;
 Making evident our own creation,
 In these stars of earth, these golden flowers.
 And the poet, faithful and far-seeing,
 Sees, alike in stars and flowers, a part
 Of the self-same, universal being,
 Which is throbbing in his brain and heart.
 Gorgeous flowerets in the sunlight shining,
 Blossoms flaunting in the eye of day,
 Tremulous leaves, with soft and silver lining,
 Buds that open only to decay;
 Brilliant hopes, all waver in gorgeous tissues,
 Flaunting gaily in the golden light;
 Large desires with most uncertain issues,
 Tender wishes, blossoming at night:
 These in flowers and men are more than seeming;
 Workings are they of the self-same powers,

Which the poet, in no idle dreaming,
 Seeth in himself and in the flowers.

Everywhere about us are they glowing,
 Some like stars, to tell us spring is born;
 Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing,
 Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn;

Not alone in spring's armorial bearing,
 And in summer's green emblazoned field,
 But in arms of brave old autumn's wearing,
 In the centre of his brazen shield;

Not alone in meadows and green alleys,
 On the mountain-top and by the brink
 Of sequestered pools in woodland valleys,
 Where the slaves of nature stoop to drink;

Not alone in her vast dome of glory,
 Not on graves of bird and beast alone,
 But in old cathedrals, high and hoary,
 On the tombs of heroes, carved in stone;

In the cottage of the rudest peasant,
 In ancestral homes, whose crumbling towers,
 Speaking of the Past unto the Present,
 Tell us of the ancient Games of Flowers;

In all places, then, and in all seasons,
 Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
 Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,
 How akin they are to human things.

And with child-like, credulous affection,
 We behold their tender buds expand;
 Emblems of our own great resurrection,
 Emblems of the bright and better land.

SUPPRESS THE SALOON.

No thoughtful person believes that we have reached a settlement of the saloon question. In other countries as well as this the curse of the saloon is commanding the attention of the best men of all parties in State and Church. It is not the discussion of an abstract question of political science that interests them, but the actual existence of a fountain of crime and poverty in the heart of even the best communities, which grows worse as the years go on. In every country the political managers—the men who are in politics for the money in it, whose one aim is to hold and control the offices—and the saloon keepers are fast friends. In the United States the saloon is the dominant element in both political parties. The political managers will do nothing to endanger the support of the liquor interests. They take their position not because they have any regard for the saloon keeper, or on account of a liking for intoxicating drinks, but because they do not believe there is any chance of party success unless they can command the patronage of the saloons.

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

LESSON XII.—JUNE 18.

THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST.

Col. 3. 1-15. Memory verses, 1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.—Col. 3. 15.

OUTLINE.

1. Change of Heart, v. 1-7.
2. Change of Conduct, v. 8-11.
- The Epistle to the Colossians was probably written A.D. 61 or 62.

LESSON HELPS.

1. "Risen with Christ"—By conversion and Baptism. Rom. 6. 4. "Seek those things which are above"—Read Matt. 6. 23; Phil. 3. 20. "Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God"—The centre of attraction to all his disciples.
2. "Set your affection on things above"—Cultivate religious aspirations. "Not on things on the earth"—This does not teach that we are not to be fond of relatives and friends, but that the earth and all its pleasures and treasures are to be used as the school-room and school-

books are used by boys and girls—to fit our souls for a larger, more mature life.

3. "Ye are dead"—By yielding your heart to God and joining the church you have, so far as you can, turned from the lower to the higher life. Develop this new spiritual life in practice. "Your life is hid with Christ in God"—Like a seed buried in the earth.

4. "Then shall ye also appear with him"—We know not what we shall be, but we shall be like him."

5. "Mortify"—Made a corpse of. "Your members which are upon the earth"—The sinful possibilities of your life. "Inordinate"—Uncontrolled. "Evil concupiscence"—Immoral living.

6. "The children of disobedience"—Those who live evil lives.

7. "Blasphemy" here stands for reviling, evil speaking.

8. "The old man with his deeds"—The unregenerate nature which you had before conversion.

9. "The new man"—The newly put on nature. "Which is renewed"—Which is being developed. "Knowledge after the image of him that created him"—Perfect knowledge of God, which would exclude all sin.

10. "Where"—In the sphere of this renewed man. "Greek nor Jew"—The two classes into which in Paul's time the religious world was divided; those trained to worship God, and those trained to worship idols. "Circumcision nor uncircumcision"—A foolish way of describing the same thing, for the phrase refers to the rite of admission into the Hebrew Church. "Barbarian"—The Greeks and Romans regarded all other nations as barbarians. "Scythian"—This race, from which the modern Russians have been developed, were regarded by the ancients as the most savage on earth.

11. "Bond nor free"—A large portion of the population of the ancient world was enslaved. But when people of these different sorts became Christians they forgot every unpleasant feature of their earthly life, for they found "Christ" to be "all, and in all." The thought of Christ changed all conditions and made all his followers brothers.

12. "Elect"—Chosen; not, however, to the exclusion of others. The sentence should read, "Put on therefore as God's chosen, holy, beloved ones. Bowels of mercies"—Or, as we would say, "hearts of mercy."

13. "Forbearing . . . forgiving"—The first word relates to present offences, the second to past offences.

14. "Above all"—Around all, as a girdle. "Charity"—Love. "Bond of perfectness"—A perfect girdle, keeping together all other virtues.

15. "Peace of God"—Peace was Christ's legacy to his disciples. "Rule"—Literally, "sit as umpire."

HOME READINGS.

- M. The new life in Christ.—Col. 3. 1-15.
- Tu. The new man.—Eph. 4. 17-24.
- W. Children of light.—1 Thess. 5. 5-11.
- Th. Walking in light.—Eph. 5. 6-16.
- F. Chosen to be holy.—1 Peter 2. 1-9.
- S. Living to God.—1 Peter 4. 1-11.
- Su. A fruitful life.—2 Peter 1. 1-8.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Change of Heart, v. 1-7.
 What things should Christians seek?
 Where is Christ seated?
 Where should our hearts' warmest affections be set?
 To what things is the Christian dead?
 Where is his life hid?
 When shall Christians appear with Christ?
2. Change of Conduct, v. 8-11.
 What five things mentioned in verse 8 has the Christian put off?
 What is meant by "the old man" and his deeds?
 What is meant by the "new man"?
 What sort of men are in the image of him that created them?
 Is it right to dislike anybody because of where he was born, or how little he knows, or how little he owns?
3. The Bond of Perfectness, v. 12-15.
 How are the Christians of Colosse addressed?
 What are they urged to put on?
 How are they to treat one another?
 Whose example are they to follow?
 What chief grace are they urged to cultivate?
 What should rule in their hearts?
 Golden Text.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson are we shown—
1. That only God can make us true Christians?
 2. That if we are Christians we should act like Christians?



The Cup of Death.

"Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."—Proverbs 23 31-32.

Look not thou upon the wine when it is red within the cup!
 Stay not for pleasure when she fills
 Her tempting beaker up!
 Though clear its depths, and rich its glow,
 A spoil of madness lurks below.

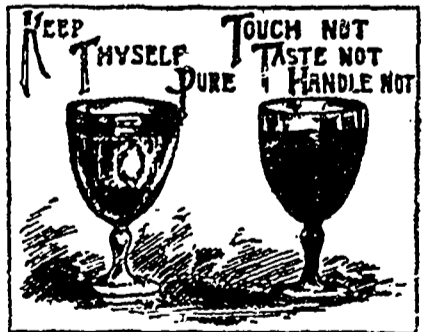
They say 'tis pleasant on the lip,
 And merry on the brain,
 They say it stirs the sluggish blood,
 And dulls the tooth of pain.
 Ah, but within its glowing deeps
 A stinging serpent, unseen, sleeps.

Its rosy lights will turn to fire,
 Its coolness turn to thirst,
 And by its mirth within the brain,
 A sleepless worm is nursed.
 There's not a bubble at the brim,
 That does not carry food for him.

Then dash the brimming cup aside,
 And spill its purple wine,
 Take not its madness to thy lip,
 Let not its curse be thine.
 'Tis red and rich—but grief and woe
 Are hid those rosy depths below.

Our lesson is part of a letter written by Paul to the church in Colosse, in which he tells them that if their hearts have risen with Jesus, if they belong to him, then they must live a new life. They must live as Jesus would have them, and put away lying and every wrong and unclean thing, and let love and truth and purity come in, and let peace rule.

As one of the worst things to break peace is alcohol, we talk about it very often that all may be warned against it.



and never let it get the least chance to rule and to spoil the lives that belong to Jesus.

"I will be pure" is the word for us today, as we finish our walk for this quarter. But look down at the foundation. Never forget that! Jesus helping me, I will be pure!

Which is better, to let things get dreadfully soiled and then wash them, or not to let them get soiled in the first place? Oh, it is better to keep pure than even to be made clean after being unclean. Let us ask Jesus to take away the very beginnings of sin and wrong in our hearts and keep us clean. Ask him to keep the wrong thoughts from coming in and to help us watch against them.