

THE RED, RED WINE:

A TEMPERANCE STORY.

THE REV. J. JACKSON WRAY'S LAST STORY.

PUBLISHED BY PERMISSION OF
WILLIAM BRIGGS, TORONTO.

CHAPTER XVI.—(Continued.)

Tom Smart lives i' Soo'gat', right at the town end. If he gets work again wi' Farmer Barrass, up i' Northgat' right at t'other end, he'll hev to pass the oppen doors of a baker's dozen of drink shops licensed by the law of England to trip up Tommy Smart an' fling him on his back in the dike he's just gotten out with his bare life. Let's see noo—

There's t' "Blue Bell" to begin wi', just opposit his aun hoose; Black Bell I call it, for it's tollin' every day the passin' bell for somebody. There's the "Barleycorn." My word! What crops an' harvest o' sin an' misery has sprung fre' that devil's grain o' corn. There's t' "Red Lion," at the corner, seekin' whom he may devour. There's t' "Sportsman's Arms," where the devil is the sportsman, gin, rum, beer, and brandy, them's the dogs, and t' game is poor fools like Tommy Smart, that are sure to get hunted down. There's the "Grapes," that calls itself an inn, an' thinks itself a peg aboo' its brother pubs. But what's in a name? A drink-shop by any other, wad smell as foul, and do the devil's work as thoroughly. There's the "Half Moon," which is sign o' the half-lunatics that spend their time there. There's t' "Cross Keys," t' oppen t' gate o' poverty, on one hand, and the door of death on t' other. There's a little dram-shop called the "White Swan," which is the only thing white about it. There's the "Griffin Inn," just the sign for a drink-shop, "Griffin" is. It's all teeth and claws, with a sting for a tongue, and another in its tail. It's a picture to the life o' the dragon Alcohol. Then there's the "Star,"—Lucifer, I expect, that wad bring doon a third part of Netherbro' to ruin. Opposite the toon-pump, the one spot where you can get good liquor, there's the "Bay Horse." I know mair than one or two that it hez carried to the grave at a gallop. There's the "Red Cow," that's poor Tommy Smart's favorite resort. He goes to get such milk as she can cheat 'im wi'; gets milked dry hisself. There's the "Angel Inn,"—a fallen un, of course, and makin' others fall. There's the "Dog and Duck." That's the lan'lord an' tippler. Poor Duck! the dog generally finishes him, feathers an' all. Then there's the "Black Swan"; nae wonder it's black, seein' the sort o' river it swims on. Noo, Mr. Hayes, ho monny ha' yo' ticked off?

'Bless me!' said Mr. Norwood Hayes, in much surprise, 'why, that is fifteen public houses!'

'Aye,' said Aaron, his voice trembling with strong feeling, 'a public house to every six score o' the population. An' men like Mr. Norwood Hayes are content to let the murderous rapine go on unhindered. "Christian" Cains wear nae averted faces noo-a-days, because their brand is not on their broo, as it was on t' fust o' that name, only on their conscience, an' "what the eye can't see the heart doesn't grieve effer;" but it will both see an' sorrow some day—some day, Mr. Hayes,—some day soon.'

Mr. Norwood Hayes was silent. What was he to say? What could he say? Nothing!

'Noo then,' continued Aaron, after a brief pause, 'Tom Smart will have to pass all these places twice ivery day! All with widely-open doors; most on e' rank, even outside the door, wi' the smell o' drink; an' he wi' that awful cravin' on him all the tahme! The Christian magistrates o' Netherborough, and among them at least one Christian minister, have deliberately licensed these mischief-makin' haunts! They have given 'em leeave an' liberty, to catch, if they can, an' fling back this poor victim into the hell of sin an' misery oot o' which the fingers of his own laible bairn hez fetched him. Do yo' hear me?' said the old man, his voice rising in the intensity of his feelings. 'They are licensed to seize hold o' poor laible Kitty's fingers, an' untwine 'em

wi' their own brutal claws, an' send her feyther to death an' ruin befoore her eyes! O God, for this mad England that such a thing can be!

CHAPTER XVII.

At length Jennie Bardsley was able to resume her labors in the Sunday School. On that first Sabbath morning of her return to her much-beloved work, she accompanied her friend, Alice Hayes, to Zion Chapel, and sat with her in the Hayes' pew. The service was conducted as usual by the pastor, the Rev. Daniel Dunwell, all except the giving out of the hymns, and reading of the notices.

Mr. Dunwell was, as I have already said, a preacher of unusual ability, and wide popularity. He was a man of fair complexion; he had no facial feature that struck you definitely as noteworthy, and in this respect his face was an index to his mental constitution, for that, too, wanted definiteness; it had in it a little too much of the willow, a good deal too little of the oak. There was, however, a singular combination in his expression of intelligence, kindness, seriousness, and humor.

Jennie Bardsley was greatly impressed by the sermon Mr. Dunwell preached that morning. She felt as if it must have been made and spoken purposely for her, and that it was, indeed, a part of the call that had come to her from God. God's calls to duty come to men and women in many ways. I myself would fain be his messenger if I may, and I will therefore report here something of what Mr. Dunwell had said.

'And thou shalt be a blessing.' That was the text that morning. 'I hold,' said the preacher, 'that true religion has its centre and life in the previous words, "I will bless thee," and that it has its circumference and activity in these words, "Thou shalt be a blessing." Abraham received a blessing from God, so he became a blessing to men. Out of the first came the last. True religion is the death of selfishness, and Christianity only fully fulfils its mission when it destroys all aims and motives which are either indifferent to or opposed to the well-being of other people. The Christian is his brother's keeper, and the more Christly he is, the more he finds it a joy to fulfil that obligation.'

'To the little band of men whom He had chosen out of the world, the Master said, "Ye are the light of the world." He had kindled among them the glow of a living flame, not that they might pick out their solitary way by the light of it—not that they might sit around it, and say, "Aha, I am warm," but that men might see it and feel its power.'

It is given to every true Christian, not so much to carry a torch as to be a torch. He himself is to be set alight; he is to move through the world's sad shadow-land, a peripatetic illumination, showing the beauty of goodness, and the tender love of Christ. It is not enough that you are not a curse; that you work no harm. The poisonous Upas tree and the barren fig tree shall both be cast into the fire. The captured rebel caught red-handed, and the sentinel asleep at his post, are alike doomed to die. You must be a blessing.

'And, O, the joy of it! In the Holy Land, says tradition, there lived a man called Eliab, whom God had blessed with much wealth. He was also cunning in the wisdom of the East. But all this could not bring peace to his heart, or satisfaction to his mind. He was often full of sorrow, and felt his life to be a burden that he would fain lay down. Then a man of God came to him, and showed him an herb possessed of wonderful healing virtues. But Eliab said, "What is that to me? My body lacks not health. It is my soul that is diseased. It were better for me to die." "The herb will do thy heart good," said the

man of God. "Take it, and go and heal seven sick men with it. Then, if thou wilt, thou mayest die!"

Eliab listened to the voice of the man of God. He took the wondrous herb, and went forth and sought sin and misery in their hiding-places. He healed seven sick people. He rescued a man from a great peril. He prevented a young man from going forward on a harmful venture. He brought smiles to the face of a tearful child. He succored the poor with his riches. Then the man of God came again to him and said, "Here is the herb of death; now thou mayest die." But Eliab said, "God forbid! My soul longs no more for death; for now only have I discovered the joy of life."

Mr. Dunwell concluded his sermon by saying, 'Every Christian has that herb of life, and every Christian may have that joy of life. In proportion as he is a blessing, he has a blessing; the approval of his conscience, the smile of his God, the love of his kind, and the delight in doing good. Like the sun his course shall be

"Right away down to the golden west
Bountiful, beautiful, blessing and blest!"

This wholesome and generous doctrine, an' the preacher's way of putting it, made a great impression on Mr. Dunwell's congregation; and to Jennie Bardsley, especially, they came as an apt and timely revelation.

CHAPTER XVIII.

'Good morning, Miss Jennie,' said Mr. Norwood Hayes, who had been too much engaged with his diaconal duties to greet her at an earlier moment, and now joined them on his homeward way. 'We are all delighted to see you up and about again. The old chapel has never looked like itself in your absence. We all thank God for your return to health.'

As usual, Mr. Hayes was hearty and genial; winsome in mien and manner. No wonder he was so greatly liked. Jennie warmly appreciated his good feeling.

'Have you had a good time this morning?' Jennie asked. 'Alice doesn't seem to have been "hit in the right place!"'

'Ha! ha! ha! Perhaps she wasn't there,' said Mr. Hayes. 'Alice has a peculiar faculty for disposing her "seeming self" in a decorous attitude in her pew, and then making excursions with her natural self into the surrounding, or even into distant, countries. It's quite wonderful, I assure you, how often and how far she can come and go between the first prayer and the Benediction.'

'All right, my honored sir,' quoth Miss Alice, in a tone of warning, lifting a threatening finger, 'wait until I get you home.'

Mr. Hayes evidently had a due regard to the possible consequences, for he deprecated the idea of punishment, and made timely surrender.

'Yes, Jennie, I had a good time,' he said, returning to the question which had been put to him, 'and so, I suppose, had everybody, with the possible exception of Alice the absent. Such a life as the pastor sketched for us this morning is worth living. Whatever the carping critic may say to the contrary, I endorse every word he said, and have had my resolution confirmed and strengthened to be a blessing.'

(To be continued.)

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