

to public announcement, Fiddler Joss and his wife, or in other words, Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Poole, would hold religious services every evening in the week. No doubt the novelty of the thing was its first attraction, and out of curiosity many went to see what was going on. When once there, the racy earnestness of Joshua Poole was enough to interest them and bring them again; and very shortly the tent was crowded every evening in the week with a miscellaneous group of men and women, most of whom had never been in a place of worship in their lives. The Gospel and Teetotalism were the prominent topics of Fiddler Joss's preaching. It is almost unavoidable in dealing with men whose besetment has been drink to preach the Gospel apart from teetotalism. The influence of Poole's preaching was marvellous. Drunken husbands became sober, scolding wives patient. Into many homes where nothing but hatred and misery had reigned for years the preaching of the tent brought peace and love and joy. Results such as these cannot be gainsaid. The news of such good tidings soon began to spread. The place gained a reputation for conversion, and for about six months every evening in the week and all day on the Sabbath an eager crowd thronged the tent to hear the word of God. Joshua Poole is a man admirably adapted for the work. He had formerly been a very bad character, his misdeeds finally landing him in prison, where in solitude and retirement he was clearly converted to God. Since that time he has been endeavouring to glorify God by such work as that indicated above. He has a great deal of natural ability, and a strong sense of humour which he turns to very good account in dealing with men. His knowledge of life and human nature is very extensive, especially of the life and nature of those who chiefly compose his congregations, his past experience giving him a power in this respect which could perhaps have been gained in no other way. Of course he says things which to polite ears sound vulgar, many of which would be better left unsaid, but that is part of the man, and you must take him as he is; and after all these detract but little, if at all, from his general usefulness. Mrs. Poole is far superior in mental power to her husband. Some of her addresses in their directness and simplicity

reveal a mind of no ordinary capacity. In her influence with the women she contributes much to the success of the work. Fiddler Joss without his wife would be like Samson without his locks. Their united efforts have been greatly blessed by the Lord. Hundreds signed the pledge, many were converted, and the foundations of a large church laid. It was evident that if the souls thus gathered in were to be saved from falling they must be carefully watched and guarded. The evil influences around them were very strong, and they could only be neutralized by religious influences equally strong and attractive. The tent could not be a permanent institution, and the Fiddler and his wife could not always stay in Limehouse. Their mission was an itinerant one, and other parts of the country wanted them. Just at that time a large public-house came into the market for sale. In the East of London the "Edinburgh Castle" has been a well-known place for many years, possessing an unenviable notoriety. Situated in the midst of a densely-populated neighbourhood it possessed the combined attractions of gin-palace, music-hall, dancing-saloon, and tea-gardens. It was thus a complete establishment for ruining both bodies and souls of men—a very stronghold of the Devil's kingdom. Over it the inscription "Mangling done here" might have placed with terrible meaning and reality in the words.

The brilliance and attractiveness of this place made it a strange contrast to some of the dirty and miserable rooms, not only devoid of any external attraction, but positively repulsive in their discomfort, in which religious services are held; and we wonder with small reason why the working-classes do not flock to them. It is only another illustration of the old truth, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

As if with the intention of bearding the lion in his den, Fiddler Joss pitched his tent directly opposite this public-house, and commenced his services within sound of the music and dancing of the singing-saloon and tea-gardens opposite. It was strange to stand in the road between these places, and listen to the varied sounds that fell upon your ears; on the one side the noisy music and boisterous voices of half-drunken revol-