



A Signboard.

I will paint you a sign, rum-seller
And hang it over your door;
A true and better signboard
Than ever you had before.
I will paint with the skill of a master
And many shall pause to see
This wonderful piece of painting,
So like the reality.

I will paint yourself, rumseller,
As you wait for that fair young boy,
Just in the morning of manhood,
A mother's pride and joy,
He has no thought of stopping,
But you greet him with a smile,
And you seem so blithe and friendly,
That he pauses to chat awhile.

I will paint you again, rumseller—
I will paint you as you stand,
With a foaming glass of liquor
Extended in your hand.
He wavers, but you urge him—
'Drink, pledge me just this one!'
And he lifts the glass and drains it,
And the hellish work is done.

And I next will paint a drunkard—
Only a year has flown,
But into this loathsome creature
The fair young boy has grown
The work was quick and rapid—
I will paint him as he lies,
In a torpid, drunken slumber,
Under the wintry skies.

I will paint you the form of the mother,
As she kneels at her darling's side,
Her beautiful boy that was dearer
Than all the world beside.
I will paint you the shape of a coffin
Labelled with one word—'Lost.'
I will paint you all this, rum-seller,
And will paint it free of cost.

The sin and the shame and the sorrow,
The crime and the want and the woe,
That are born there in your workshop,
No hand can paint, you know.
But I'll paint you a sign, rum-seller,
And many shall pause to view,
This wonderful swinging signboard,
So terribly, fearfully true.

—League Journal.

A Famous Drunken Quarrel.

Cassio: I will rather sue to be despised, than to deceive so good a commander, with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? and speak parrot? and squabble? swagger? swear? and discourse fustian with one's shadow? O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee—devil.

Iago: What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

Cas.: I know not.

Iago: Is it possible?

Cas.: I can remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore—O, that men should put an enemy into their mouths to steal away their brains! That we should, with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

Iago: Why, you are now well enough; how came you thus recovered?

Cas.: It hath pleased the devil, drunkenness, to give place to the devil, wrath; one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

Iago: Come, you are too severe a moralist; as the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this

had not befallen; but, since it is, as it is, mend it for your own good.

Cas.: I will not ask him for my place again; he shall tell me, I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man and by-and-bye a fool, and presently a beast! O, strange; every inordinate cup is unblessed and the ingredient is a devil.—Shakespeare (Othello).

The Working Men and Temperance.

We want the working-men and the laborers upon the side of absolute Temperance. Where are we to look for a more passionate idealism than as yet gathers round the effort, if not among the great body of the working classes, among men and women who have been steadily victimized by tempters who absorb a third of their wages? They ought to see that an eager combination for Temperance will enable them to help one another and the whole cause of a changed and bettered society, more than anything else that they can do. They have everything to make them passionate upon the subject. Their homes have been ruined in thousands by their drinking, their thrift destroyed, their poverty doubled, their intelligence weakened, their power to keep the advantages they gain enfeebled, their children diseased, their women worked to death or degraded, their enemies strengthened, their leisure and their culture reduced to the least possible quantity, their pleasures corrupted, their slavery to capital riveted upon them, their violence increased, their crime—where there is crime—rendered brutal, their health so spoiled that old age finds them easy prey and the workhouse remains their only refuge. They owe a debt of stern and abiding wrath to drink, and to tempters to drink, and I would they would pay the debt by total abstinence, by a great movement among themselves, led by all their unions and associations, to make the workers of England sober men and women. Till this is made by the men themselves and of their own impulse, one of the planks in their platform—all success in social reform will linger, like a lame man, upon the way. With it, they would be so strong that no abuse or injustice would have a chance of resisting them. But every enemy the men have supports the public house. Their enemies know, as long as they can put one of these places at every forty yards in a poor neighborhood, that they will keep their ill-gotten power over the employed. A great deal is said of the cheerful glass, and of robbing the poor man of his beer. I want them to be robbed of nothing. I want them to deprive themselves of their great curse by their own action; and they will not deprive themselves of any very pleasant thing. For that which is soil to them is not pure. It is plain poison, adulterated with every kind of villainy. No one is punished for this adulteration; this part of the iniquity never lessens; and all the time the very men who ought to be the most furious with this wickedness, and who suffer most from it, are hand and glove with the devil who enslaves and slays them. It is as pathetic a thing as exists in the whole world.—Stopford A. Brooke, M.A.

A Startling Balance-sheet.

Behold me, then, in the robust period of life, reduced to imbecility and decay.

Hear me count my gains, and the profits which I have derived from the midnight cup.

Twelve years ago I was possessed of a healthy frame of mind and body.

I was never strong, but I think my constitution (for a weak one) was as happily exempt from the tendency to any malady as it was possible to be.

I scarce knew what it was to ailing anything.

Now, except when I am losing myself in a sea of drinks, I am never free from those uneasy sensations in head and stomach which are so much worse to bear than any definite pains or aches.

At that time I was seldom in bed after six in the morning, summer and winter.

I awoke refreshed, and seldom without some

merry thoughts in my head, or some piece of a song to welcome the new-born day.

Now the first feeling that besets me, after stretching out the hours of recumbence to their last possible extent, is a forecast of the wearisome day that lies before me, with a secret wish that I could have lain on still, or never awaked.

Life itself, my waking life, has much of the confusion, the trouble, the obscure perplexity, of an ill dream. In the daytime I stumble upon dark mountains.

Business, which, though never particularly adapted to my nature, yet as something of necessity to be gone through, and therefore best undertaken with cheerfulness, I used to enter upon with some degree of alacrity, now wearies, affrights, perplexes me.

I fancy all sorts of discouragements, and am ready to give up an occupation which gives me bread, from a harassing conceit of incapacity. The slightest commission given me by a friend, or any small duty which I have to perform for myself, as giving orders to a tradesman, etc., haunts me as a labor impossible to be got through.

So much the springs of action are broken.
—Charles Lamb.

Three times France has lowered the standard of height in her armies. Scientific men who have given the matter impartial investigation declare that the use of tobacco is one of the chief causes.

A Capital Story.

Full of dash and spirit from beginning to end; full of the interest of real human lives, their joys, their sorrows; full of the dauntless courage and heroism that marked the old Greeks and Persians of the days of Thermopylae, Salamis and Plataea, one of the most stirring times the world has ever seen—such is the new story that will start in the Montreal 'Witness' the second week in December.

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