

The Price of a Drink.

The price of a drink—if you want to know
 What some are willing to pay for it, go
 Through that wretched tenement over
 there,
 With dingy windows and broken stairs,
 Where foul disease, like a vampire,
 crawls
 With outstretched wings o'er the mouldy
 walls;
 There poverty dwells, with her hungry
 brood,
 Wild-eyed as demons for want of food;
 There shame, in a corner, crouches low;
 There violence deals its cruel blow;
 And innocent ones are thus accursed
 To pay the price of another's thirst.

Five cents a glass; oh, if that were all,
 The sacrifice would, indeed, be small;
 But the money's worth is the least amount
 We pay and whoever will keep account
 Will learn the terrible waste and blight
 That follows this ruinous appetite!
 Five cents a glass, does any one think
 That that is really the price of a drink?

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MARCH 13, 1897.

TEMPERANCE NUMBER.

"SO RUN THAT YE MAY OBTAIN."

There has been a great rage, as you have been aware, for walking, running, or footing it in any way. He was the best man who could go the greatest number of miles in a week, or the greatest number of quarter miles in the same number of quarter hours. The interesting question was who could plod along with the greatest number of big blisters on each foot, or best endure being stirred up every fifteen minutes from a few winks of much-needed sleep, and go to sleep again the soonest after accomplishing the required number of laps on a tan-bark track.

This was all very well in its way. Walking is not a bad thing for the health at any time. But for most people there are better ways of getting over the ground. Even the professional pedestrian will not refuse, now and then, to make use of the railway.

There is one journey, however, which we all have to make on foot. That is the journey to heaven, where we all want to go. There is no elevated railway to take us there.

Furthermore, as he has this long walk to take—for heaven is not very near to most of us—he will try to fit himself for it; to go into training, and to keep in training, so that he may not break down on the way, or find himself with a short record when the end of his time arrives. He will bear in mind the warning of St. Paul in to-day's lesson: "So run that you may obtain."

How does the pedestrian manage to run so as to obtain his fame and his money? In the first place he works hard and sticks to his work. He does not waste his time by sitting down on the benches and watching the other man. He keeps on the track as long as he is able. When he cannot keep on any longer, he takes the rest and food that he needs—not a bit more—and goes at it again. Sometimes he feels ready to drop,

but he keeps on, and the fatigue passes away.

Secondly, he not only keeps to his work, but he avoids everything else that can interfere with it. He does not live on plum-cake and mince-pie, or fill up with bad whiskey and drugged beer. He adopts a good, plain, wholesome diet—something that will stick to his bones and go to muscle, not to fat.

Thirdly, he does not stagger round the ring with a Saratoga trunk on his back. Far from it. He lays aside every weight that he can. He even makes his clothes as light as possible. He does not carry anything more than himself over the five hundred miles that he has to go.

Lastly, he has a director. He does not call him by that name—he calls him a trainer; but it comes to the same thing. He does not trust his own judgment, but has some one else to feed him, to tend him, to check him, or to urge him on.

Now, in all things the pedestrian sets us a good example; in the earnestness which inspires him, and the means he takes to insure success.

Imitate him in these in the great journey before you, in which so much more than fame and money is involved. In the first place, keep to your work; let every waking moment be a step toward heaven. Be not weary in well-doing. Secondly, use what the world has to give so that it may help you on your course, and not for its own sake. Eat and drink so that your body may be strong enough to serve it. Thirdly, do not put a great load on your back, unless you have got some good use to make of it. You will have to drop it at the end of your race, and it will only keep you back and prevent your winning. Lastly, do not trust yourself too much. Have some one to help you—a director who will guide you and tell you when you make mistakes, when you are going too fast and too slow.

This is nothing but common prudence; use it, and your transit to the kingdom of heaven shall be both rapid and sure.

THE MOCKER.

A TEMPERANCE HOMILY FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY MARK OBERYL.

A very wise man who lived a long time ago declared that "wine was a mocker." A mocker promises something he cannot give. I want to show how wine is a mocker by promising to do something it cannot really do.

Wine is a mocker—

I. By promising strength, but bringing weakness.

For many years good people believed that alcohol was really a strengthening agent. Strong men took it to maintain their strength. Sickly people took it to make them well. The old-fashioned doctors ordered it to their patients and talked about nourishing port. Soldiers in the camp, sailors on the seas, labourers in the field, and miners in the pit, all took alcohol because they thought their work could not be done without it. Wine deluded them into thinking they could not keep up without its aid. It deceived them, and they were not wise. Alcohol gave them artificial strength, and then left them weaker than before. It promised strength, but left weakness. Wine is a mocker.

We are wiser now. Doctors have studied wine, and have proved that it does not really make us strong at all. It is not a food. It does not make brain, bone, or muscle. On the contrary, it weakens all three. Men can work longer and harder without drink than with it. I will give you two illustrations to show you the truth of this. A medical man took some navvies and divided them into two gangs. He set them both to the same work. The first week he gave one gang water to drink and the other beer. Then he watched to see which gang would do the best work. At first the beer drinkers forged well ahead. The water drinkers were much slower. But in a few hours the beer men slackened, and the water men increased their pace, and when the reckoning came it was found that the men who drank water had done by far the most work. Alcohol mocked the workers by seeming to impart strength, but in reality it stole away their muscular power. Some years ago our soldiers were in Abyssinia, and they had to make a road four hundred miles long over the rough mountains. The General made them drink tea, and though the work was hard and the climate trying, there was only one man that fell out of the ranks through sickness. So you see men can do better work and endure more hardship without drink than with it.

The greatest athletes are abstainers. They know that there is no strength in wine. *Wheaton walked 5,000 miles in 48 1/2*

hundred days without alcohol. In one of the great Arctic expeditions the man who plauted the Union Jack nearest to the North Pole was Adam Ayles. He had travelled in a sledge in that ice-bound region for 110 days, and pushed farther than anybody else, because he had not been deceived into thinking there was strength in wine. When men say you must take something to strengthen you, tell them "Wine is a mocker."

II. Wine mocks us by pretending to warm us.

One day last winter two men met in the street on a cold, frosty day. They stopped to talk just outside a public-house, and one said to the other—

"Come in and have a drop of something to keep the cold out."

"I don't mind if I do," said the other, "it's very sharp this morning."

So they went inside and drank some hot spirits. As they drank, a beautiful warm feeling spread all over their bodies, and as they passed out one said to the other—

"There's nothing like a drop of brandy to keep the cold out."

But all the time they were being mocked, because in a few minutes they were colder than ever. You have all heard of Dr. Nansen, who has just come back in the Fram from the Arctic Sea. His first long journey as an explorer was the crossing of Greenland. He was accompanied in his perilous journey by five brave companions. It was intensely cold. Did Dr. Nansen allow his men to drink alcohol to help them to resist the cold? Certainly not! He says, "My experience leads me to take a decided stand against stimulants and narcotics of all kinds." You will readily see that if alcohol is not needed to keep the cold out amid the snows of Greenland and the ice of the Polar Sea, it is not needed in England. The Arctic explorers have taught us that wine is a mocker when it professes to give warmth.

III. Wine mocks us when it professes to be a stimulant; it is really a narcotic.

Thousands of people take wine because they believe it to be a stimulant. They are deceived. It is not a stimulant at all. A stimulant is something which makes us stronger. People take alcohol, and because they feel stronger they think they are stronger. But they are mocked. A glass of wine is like spurs to a tired horse. It quickens momentarily, but not permanently. The strength vanishes as quickly as it came, and leaves the man weaker than before. Alcohol is a narcotic. It numbs the sensibilities instead of stimulating them.

Take an illustration from the clock in your dining-room. You know it has a pendulum. If there were no pendulum, the wheels of your clock would fly round so fast that you could hardly see them. The weight of the pendulum keeps the wheels in check and makes them move slowly. Now, our heart, if left to itself, would beat as fast as the wheels of the clock would run without a pendulum. But our heart is held in check by nerves. When we take alcohol it is like taking the pendulum off the clock. The weakened nerves relax their control over the action of our heart, and it beats very fast, giving us what doctors call palpitation. Our heart goes pit-a-pat! pit-a-pat! pit-a-pat! "Wine is a mocker, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

Let me close this little homily for Temperance Sunday by quoting the words of a very wise man:

Who hath woe?
 Who hath sorrow.

They that tarry long at the wine.
 They that go to seek mixed wine.
 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.
 At the last it biteh like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

WHY SHE LIKED THE COUNTRY.

BY EDWARD CARSWELL.

"You taking dinner to your papa, too?" asked little Susie, as she stood on the large, flat stone that covered the spring, from beneath which came the clear, cool water through a crevice in a large rock. "Yes," said Annie, who rinsed out a stone jug with water from the spring. "he's at work in the field."
 "What you doing?"
 "I am washing out this jug so it won't taste of the nasty old beer."
 "What beer?"
 "Why, we used to live in the big city, you know."
 "That was nice."
 "No, it wasn't. We lived in a big house full of people, all real poor, and lots of boys and girls ragged and always hungry, and they used to fight and

quarrel, and so did their fathers and mothers. And there wasn't any garden or grass or flowers; just the street to play in, and it was always full of carts and horses and crowds of people, so you couldn't play. Then when I took pa his dinner I always had to take this jug to the nasty saloon on the corner and get it filled with beer, and there were always drunken men and women there, and I was afraid. They swore awful, and sometimes I had to fight to keep the bad boys from stealing the beer when I went out. Pa was always cross, and ma used to cry, and sometimes was cross, too, and we were always hungry; and I believe it was all in the beer, 'cause since we have been in the country and pa drinks the water I take, he isn't cross a bit, and laughs and plays with us, and ma sings while she works, and we all have enough to eat. Oh! it's just lovely to be in the country with the flowers and green grass, and lovely ferns, and pretty birds flying around and singing. I don't want to go back to the city any more, and I don't want a taste of the nasty old beer to be left in this jug, so I always give it a good washing when I come to this spring. I wish everybody could live in the country."

Significant and statesman-like are the words of Mr. Gladstone on the seeming (?) difficulty about the revenue: "Gentlemen,—You need not give yourselves any trouble about the revenue. The question of revenue must never stand in the way of needed reforms. Besides, with a sober population, not wasting their earnings, I shall know where to get the revenue."

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

MARCH 21, 1897.

Paul's sister's son.—Acts 23. 16-18.

PAUL IN JEOPARDY.

The apostle was now before the council, where every means had been adopted to convict him, as a violator of the law, but every scheme of his enemies failed. All their accusations were false. Paul had acted so righteously that nothing could be proved against him. Here is an example for us, especially those who are in the morning of life, always aim to do right. It is possible to err, but always do your best to know what is right and act accordingly.

THE RAGE OF THE JEWS.

Not having secured a conviction, they formed a scheme to murder him. Their conduct proved their cowardice. As they could not prove him to be guilty of crime, they resolved upon lynch-law, that they might thus get rid of him, whose conduct was a standing reproach of their own actions. These men thus bound themselves together with an oath, as to what they would do, verse 12. Every step which they took only made their own guilt more conspicuous. When men enter upon a wicked course, they are often drawn further into the depths of wickedness than they ever anticipated. Leave off sinful practices at the commencement.

THE PLOT DISCOVERED.

"Be sure your sin will find you out." Schemes, however deeply they may be laid, will be discovered; plots, however ingeniously contrived, will be found out. Men may join hand in hand, but they will be punished. Paul's persecutors fondly hoped that they would accomplish their wicked purpose concerning him, but see how they were deceived. A person heard their conversation, and he, being a relative of Paul, made the secret known to those in authority, and means were immediately adopted to prevent the prisoner falling into their hands. He who numbers the hairs of the heads of his people, can use whatever means he sees fit to adopt for their welfare, and the accomplishment of his gracious purposes. "In all thy ways acknowledge him."

PAUL'S CONDUCT.

Paul knew by revelation that he was to go to Rome, but this did not prevent him using prudent means to save his own life. His relative having told him what he knew of the intentions of his accusers, Paul immediately laid the matter before the civil authorities, and soon Paul was rescued. We must always use means for personal and relative well-being, but do everything in humble reliance upon God. In other words, "trust in God and do your duty." The protection which he thus obtained should inspire us with faith in the promises of God, who will never leave his faithful ones who trust in him.