

for the lesson must never be encroached upon by any one but himself. No stray visitor shall, with his permission, deluge the school with a cataract of small talk, and for this all thanks.—*S. S. Journal.*

### The Men on the Lookout.

We were in a steamer that was pushing its way eastward through a fog. We could only see bare, dull tracts of water, an occasional buoy—consisting of a spar or a frame that carried a bell dismally rung by the motion of the waves—a clump of desolate rocks, the edge of an island, or a vessel fearful of a collision, and pathetically blowing a fish-horn. But, look a-head. There, in the steamer's bows, stand two men. They only stand and look out upon the water—the one to starboard, the other to port. Do they hear a suspicious sound ahead? Do they notice an ominous appearance amid the fog? They turn, and cry back their warning to those in command, and then look again. What a steadfast, vigilant watch they maintain!

The men on the lookout! What are we, to whom God has intrusted the care of so many souls, but those ever on the lookout? Do we notice rocks ahead? Do our eyes discover the danger from evil companions, of bad books, or personal habits of an irreligious nature? Turn! Cry out! Sound the alarm! Is any soul slumbering amid the fatal delusions of impenitence, yielding to the seductive influences of a careless, sinful life, carrying them on to the breakers? Do we see the death-surf whitening around ledges in the very pathway of the soul?

Turn! Spare not! Cry aloud! Sound the warning!—*S. S. Journal.*

### William Gray's Choice; or, What is Liberty?

BY MAUD D. HOWARD.

"ONLY leave the drink alone, William, and all will be well," said poor, heartbroken Mrs. Gray, to her husband, who was bitterly bemoaning the hard times. It was evening, and the three little Grays were soon to go to bed without their tea. Indeed, their last meal had been only dry bread and cold water, partaken of about midday. This was not anything unusual with them—poor, miserably clad, half-starved children of the drunkard!

Their father was a gardener, and no better workman was to be found than he; but most of his wages were spent at the tavern.

Their mother was sober, intelligent, but not very strong—not strong enough to go out by the day and earn the support of her three little ones.

Times truly were hard with them—as, indeed, they always are with those who take the intoxicating cup. If it had not been for the interest manifested in their sad case by some members of the Temperance Society, they would probably have died from cold and hunger during the winter now just over.

"Hold your tongue, woman—don't dictate to me. I'm a decent workman, who has a right to his glass whenever he wants it. No one shall deprive me of that liberty. Yes, give me liberty or give me death!" he shouted, and swung his arms about his head in a frenzy.

The children fled to their mother, and cowed behind her skirts.

"Hush, William. You do not lose your liberty by not drinking; but by giving up this poison, which is destroying both your body and soul, you become what your Creator intended you to be—a man in his own image," said his wife.

The man reeled towards her with clenched fist, and an oath upon his lips, when a smart rap was heard at the door.

This caused the man to drop his arm, and he sank into the nearest chair. The woman answered the summons. When the door was opened, the rays of light from within fell on the form of a gentleman who stood on the threshold, with the darkness of the street for a background.

"Good evening, Mrs. Gray," said the gentleman. "I just stepped around to invite you and Mr. Gray to a social we intend holding to-morrow evening. Oh! good evening, Mr. Gray. I'm very glad to see you. I hope I find you well."

The visitor entered, and he and William Gray shook hands. It was no difficult matter to perceive the state of affairs in that one glance which the visitor cast around the room. The fireless stove itself spoke volumes; while the excited expression in Gray's eyes told the tale of inebriety and its dreadful results, seen in the squalid surroundings.

The gentleman began a conversation, in which he knew he must be very guarded, owing to the condition of the man, by saying:

"I have called to seriously entreat you to come to-morrow night and sign the pledge."

"You would have me give up my privilege of taking a glass or two when I feel like it," William answered, sullenly.

"Consider what you would gain by doing so," said the gentleman, kindly. "Let us calculate the gains and losses separately," he continued. "First, then, the *gains*: Good health, better living, a respectable position in society, and, above all, a fairer hope of securing your eternal salvation. Now, the *losses*: Remember, this will surely come if you persevere in the use of alcohol—impaired health, penury, degradation for yourself and family, and, what is to be feared more than anything else, your eternal shame and misery. Choose, then, between what makes life a remorse; choose between the service of our Lord and the service of Satan. You know the wages of sin is death. Why not accept the blessed alternative of everlasting life, and a place in the kingdom of Jesus? Come, sign the pledge. Our society will stand by you, and pray for you, until your feet rest on the sure foundation. Do come."

William Gray bowed his head on his hands. They saw he was deeply moved. Presently he lifted his head. Over his face had passed a wonderful change. The wild look had gone out of his eyes, and in its place shone a calm, resolute light. He then said:

"I now know I have been following my own way too long. I have made up my mind, God helping me, to try and do right—to live soberly."

"God be praised!" broke in his wife.

"Amen! You will find in your Christian walk that the will of God is the way of perfect liberty," said their kind friend, who had accidentally struck a chord Gray had been harping on.

After the gentleman's departure, a basketful of good things was delivered at the door by the neighbouring grocer, who said that he had been paid for them, but was in secret bound to give no further information.

The children could hardly wait for their mother to cut a loaf of bread, so hungry were they. At last, however, to their infinite satisfaction, they each held a large slice—battered too. Whoever had sent the present, evidently was acquainted with the tastes of children, for there were apples and a package of candies, at the sight of which the little Grays fairly screamed with delight.

Before retiring for the night, Mrs. Gray said: "William, God has been very good to us all our lives. Let us thank him for the past, and ask him to make us in the future more deserving of his love and goodness."

The next night, at the meeting, William Gray signed the pledge, and, by the grace of God, has ever since kept it.

His children have joined the Band of Hope. There is no happier family than his on the face of this broad earth.

He himself is an active worker in the temperance cause, and says:

"A man only begins to know what liberty is when he does all things to the glory of God."

### A Country Place in Heaven.

BY AMELIA E. BARR.

"MY dear, dear lass, thou art goin' away,  
From t' dark, sad streets o' this weary town;  
Where t' smoke-cloud shadows the brightest day,  
And the black rains allus fallin' down,  
From clemmin' and cold and pain and care,  
And t' shadow o' death that hides w' them;  
Thou'rt goin' to God, and to Heaven so fair,  
And to t' streets of t' New Jerusalem.

"Ay, lad, but I should be amazed and lost;  
So I've asked o' God a better thing  
Than the golden streets, and angel host,  
And the multitudes that shout and sing  
I'm weary to death. I'd like it best,  
If he'd find some green and quiet spot,  
'Mong the hills o' God, where I could rest,  
Till t' trouble o' earth was clean forgot.

"For many a year my heart hes pined  
For a sight o' Cheviot's still, blue fells;  
For their lonely becks and fresh, clear wind,  
For t' yellow broom and bonnie blue bells.  
And so, where t' river of God runs calm  
'Mong t' hills of Heaven, while t' soft sweet breeze  
Just murmurs about me like a palm,  
I'll rest, and listen beneath the trees.

"For, oh! I'm weary, and fear'd, and sad;  
And the thought o' multitudes troubles me;  
And it seems as if I couldn't be glad  
In t' golden city, if I wanted thee.  
In Heaven there's country places, I know;  
So I've prayed to rest in some quiet spot,  
Till ta comes to me; and then, dear Joe,  
The trouble of earth will be forgot.  
And I'll walk with thee on the golden street,  
And I'll sing with thee the glad, new song,  
And I won't be feared for the crowds we meet,  
For the peace of Heaven will hev made me strong."

*Cornwall-on-the-Hudson.*

### Billy Mehiggin.

OLD Billy Mehiggin was an Irishman, and that was no fault of his: but he was a drunken Irishman, and that was his fault. With the money he got for sawing wood he bought whisky, and he drank, and his wife, Bridget Mehiggin, drank, and a dulcet chorus it was that came from their cabin down by the lake. But Billy joined the temperance society and took the pledge, signing his name with his hard, horny hand where he ought to place it when he took the obligation.

Not long after, Billy went one cold day to saw some wood for a whisky-shop keeper in town; for, alas, there is but one.

"Billy," said the tavern-keeper, "aren't you cold inside?"

"Sure I am," said Billy.

"Thin drink they leave you, don't they, them temperance folks?" said the landlord.

"Tain't very thick, ye're right," said Billy.

"Now, Billy," said the whisky-dealer, with a twinkle in his eye, "wouldn't you like a drop of something warm? It shan't cost you anything."

Billy wiped his mouth with his hand—the hand that had figured in the taking his obligation—and slowly said, "Won't ye tell?"

"No, no," said the tavern-keeper, rubbing his hands and smiling through his eyes. "What shall it be, Billy?"

"Covld wather," said Billy, with a grin.