

A Sign-Board.

I will paint you a sign, rum seller
And hang it above your door;
A truer and better sign-board
Than you ever 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 you yourself, rum-seller,
As you wait for that fair young boy,
Just in the morn 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, rum-seller;
I will paint you as you stand
With a foaming glass of liquor
Holding in either 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 will next paint a drunkard;
Only a year has flown,
But unto this loathsome creature
The fair young boy has grown.
The work was quick and rapid;
I will paint as he lies
In a torpid, drunken slumber,
Under the wintry skies.

I will paint 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 the shape of the coffin
Labelled with one word—"Lost!"
I will paint all this, rum seller,
I will paint it free of cost.

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

Girlhood of Mrs. Livermore.

BY SARAH K. BOLTON.

MARY A. LIVERMORE, the famous lecturer, is a striking example of a self-made woman. She was descended from ancestors who for six generations had been Welsh preachers; and her father and mother were earnest Christians also. At school she was a great favourite, because she was especially kind to all poor children. If a boy or girl wore shabby clothes, or was ridiculed, she always showed them especial attention; or if they had meagre dinners, she shared hers with them.

She was a mother to the five other children in the home. As they were in straitened circumstances, and there were very few playthings, she used to entertain the others by holding meetings in her father's woodshed—making benches of logs, and setting up split sticks for the people. She would pray and preach, and the rest were delighted to listen to what they considered wonderful eloquence.

The mother—Mrs. Rice—would smile at the peculiar spectacle; but the father would look on reverently and sadly, and say: "I wish you had been a boy; you could have been trained for the ministry."

So anxious was Mary for the conversion of the rest, that she would awaken her father and mother at ten o'clock at night, and beg them to pray for her sisters. "It's no matter about me," she said,

with her sweet, self-sacrifice; "if they are saved I can bear anything."

While so much in earnest she was merry, and fond of out-door sports. One day after sliding on the ice—she came into the house in great glee, exclaiming:

"It's splendid sliding!"

"Yes," said the father, "it's good fun, but wretched for the shoes."

The conscientious child saw how hard it was for the father to buy shoes, and never slid upon the ice again.

This was much like Ralph Waldo Emerson, who, when a lad, took a book out of the circulating library, for which he paid six cents. Being reproved by an aunt for spending this money when his widowed mother was struggling, he carried back the book unread, and for years could not be prevailed upon to read it.

When Mary was twelve years old she began to be eager to earn for her support, and to help the family. She loved books, and was not fond of sewing; but she thought if she could learn dress-making, this would bring money. For three months she worked in a shop without pay to learn the trade, and then, for three months, she received thirty-seven cents a day. This seemed such a slow way of earning, that she began to look for other work.

She went to a large clothing establishment, and asked for a dozen red flannel shirts to make. The proprietor wondered, probably, who the little twelve-year-old child could be; but she had an honest face, and he did up the bundle for her. She was to receive only six and a quarter cents apiece, and they must be returned at a specified time. Every night she worked in her room—sometimes till the early morning hours—to get those shirts ready, that the pittance might help father and mother. It is not strange that so heroic a child has come to a remarkable womanhood!

When the day came on which the work was to be done, she had made only half the shirts. There was a knock at the door:

"Does Mary Rice live here?" asked a strange voice of the mother, who had gone to the door to open it.

"Yes," was the reply.

"Well, she took a dozen red flannel shirts from my shop to make, and she hasn't returned 'em!" said the man, somewhat annoyed.

"It can't be my daughter," said the astonished Mrs. Rice.

The man was sure, but did not know what answer to make, when Mary appeared on the scene.

"Yes, mother; I got these shirts of the man."

"You promised to get 'em done, Miss," said the now re-assured man, "and we are in a great hurry."

"You shall have the shirts to-morrow night," said the mother.

When the man had gone, Mrs. Rice burst into tears.

"We are not so poor as that, my dear child," she said. "What is to become of you, if you take all the cares of the world upon your shoulders?"

She did not dream that her little girl was some day to watch over dying men on battle fields, take them home to die in the arms of their mothers, or let them die in her own, become one of the most active helpers in raising fifty million dollars for the sanitary and Christian commission in our civil war, become one of the most eloquent lecturers of the country, travelling twenty-five thousand miles annually in her work, and honoured and beloved in two hemispheres.

Little Mary Rice longed for an education, and the way to obtain it finally opened. Dr. Neale,

her minister, knew her noble and earnest spirit, and assisted her in going to the Charleston Female Seminary. Before long one of the teachers died, and Mary was asked to take her place, venturing out of school to fit herself for her classes. She thus earned enough to pay for her schooling, and was bright enough to take the four-years' course in two years.

When she had finished the course, she had the opportunity of going to a Virginia plantation as a governess. Here she remained for two years, and came home at the end of that time with six hundred dollars, and a good supply of clothes. How proud her fond parents must have been of her? Now she was able to help them.

She became the principal of the high-school in Duxbury, Mass., and was an inspiration to every scholar in the school. Yes! and an inspiration to somebody else in the neighbourhood—a young minister, whose church was near her school-house. She became deeply interested in his sermons, and he became deeply interested in her. The result was, that at twenty-three she married the Rev. D. P. Livermore, and has been a happy wife, and mother of three children.

Now past sixty, she looks and seems many years younger. Her home is at Melrose, Massachusetts. —Our Youth.

The Swiss Hero.

As one travels through Switzerland he sees constantly exhibited in the shop-windows a group in bronze, marble, or wood carving. It represents a man pierced with ten spears; and as he sinks to the ground, dying, his comrades press victoriously upon their astonished foes.

The group evidently commemorated some Swiss hero; and we listened with pleasure as the Swiss shop-keeper repeated, with patriotic pride, the old story of Arnold de Winkelried.

In 1836 a large Austrian army invaded Switzerland. All the patriots gathered at Sempach to resist them. The armies fronted each other in silence. There was no point in the unbroken front of the Austrians where the Swiss could make an attack.

Suddenly Winkelried, shouting "Make way for liberty!" charged alone upon the Austrians. Extending his arms, he gathered ten spears within his grasp. Their points pierced his heart; he bore them to the ground; but the breach had been made. The Swiss rushed through the opening, and, stimulated by Winkelried's example, defeated the Austrians with terrible slaughter.

How often in moral advances some hero draws the attack upon himself, and falls a martyr, while others march to victory through the opening he has made.

One Brick Laid Wrong.

SOME workmen were once building a very large brick tower, which was to be carried up very high. In laying a corner, one brick—either by accident or carelessness—was set a very little out of line. The work went on without its being noticed; but as each course of bricks was kept in line with those already laid, the tower was not put up exactly straight, and the higher they built the more insecure it became.

One day, when the tower had been carried up about forty feet, there was a tremendous crash. The building had fallen, burying the men in the ruins!

Do you ever think what ruin may come of one bad habit, one brick laid wrong, while you are now building a character for life? Remember that in youth the foundation is laid.