

how to do it instead, and there is not the shadow of a doubt, that a
the power and influence she really possesses, EACH IN HER OWN HOME, this coun-
try might be rid almost entirely of the stigma now attached to it, of being A
NATION OF DRUNKARDS.

D. M.

THE REAPER AND PUBLICAN.

IN the harvest of 1848 a young woman, who was an abstainer, went to reside in
the country. Being out of a situation she sought and obtained employment as
a reaper. She thought while so employed she might do good; and one evening,
after a hard day's work, she assembled together, in the place where she was staying,
two or three children, and began to speak to them about abstinence. She told them

of what little boys and girls were doing elsewhere, and so interested them that they requested her to let them come to her another night. This was agreed to, and various meetings were held with much success thereafter. When the harvest work drew towards a close, our young friend began to think of returning to town to seek a situation; but before doing so, resolved to give her young friends a *soirée* out of her own scanty savings from her wages. There was to be no charge to the children; and all who had attended her meetings were to be admitted on condition that they brought a passage of Scripture against drunkenness. Each one was to have a different passage, and then each one was to commit the passage of Scripture to memory, so as to be able to remember it afterwards.

A more excellent condition of admission to a *soirée* perhaps could not have been thought of, or one more calculated to do good to the children, who were all anxious about finding their passages, and had, in many instances, to apply to their parents to find out a passage for them. As soon as our young friend returned from her work in the evening, a number of her Scripture searchers were waiting to show her their passages—frequently several had chosen a passage which had already been discovered by others. These had to go and seek again and again, till fathers and mothers had to consult each other, and the very teacher and minister had to be enlisted in the search to procure the requisite number of different passages.

There lived one publican in the village close by. His children had been attending the meetings; they too had been seeking for passages, but as they were discountenanced in the search at home, they sought help from the neighbours around. This led to many shrewd remarks and important sayings, and long before the hour of the *soirée* these children had been prohibited by their father to go to such a meeting. Their mother, however, rather favoured their going, and gave them her permission, and promised to stand between them and all consequences. The night before the *soirée*, the final review of all the passages of Scripture took place, and the next day was a busy day with the children, humming over their verses and hearing one another, to see that each had got his passage without mistake.

The *soirée* hour came. Our young friend had got permission to hold it in an unused loft, which she had fitted up with taste and neatness; and then, without aid from anyone, laughed at and derided, she met her little band, and welcomed them in her homely and kind manner. As soon as all had been seated, she gave out the twenty-third Psalm, which was sung to the good old tune, *Martyrdom*. She read a portion of Scripture and prayed, and then proceeded to help her young guests to the milk and bread she had prepared for them. After this was over, she commenced to hear the passages of Scripture, presenting all who could say their passages correctly with a set of **JUVENILE ABSTAINERS' ABSTINENCE MELODIES**, and making remarks on the passages as she heard them. A hymn, or psalm, or melody was sung alternately to keep up the pleasant feeling of the meeting; and things had proceeded pretty nearly to a close, when suddenly the door of the apartment was violently thrust open, and in stepped the village innkeeper, foaming with rage, declaring he would let them see whether he was not master of his own house, and commanding his children to leave that place instantly; and, addressing himself to the young friend who had got up the *soirée*, demanded what new religion this was she had come to set up, and whether she was not ashamed of herself to dare to come there and try to cheat innocent children, threatening to

go to the nearest justice of the peace to have her apprehended. A gentle word from our young friend, as to her doing nothing but what was commanded in the Bible, only drew forth the enraged publican's wrath. "Bible! Bible! do you really mean to tell me to my face that ye find sic nonsense in the Bible? No, no, ye may deceive the weans with your teetotal nonsense, but I ken my Bible owre weel to be such an idiot as listen to you." "Well, sir," said our young friend, "since you know your Bible, give us chapter and verse for your trade; and show us from your Bible that your trade is a blessing and not a curse." "'Deed I would not think it worth my while to waste my breath on a bit shearer lassie; my certie, ye're na blate, to ask me to prove to you that my Bible does not recommend us to tak a drap of spirits for our stomach's sake. Did you never read that passage where it says, 'every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused?' What d'ye say to that, ye infidel? Will ye tell me that ye dare refuse to tak the good creatures of God and ca' yersel a Christian?" "But stop a minute, now," said our young friend, "don't be in such a passion. I am sure if I am an infidel you should set me a good example; for you know your Bible, and profess to be a Christian. Now, just have patience a minute, and we'll give you Scripture for all we have to say." "O, I dare say ye will—the devil did the same to the Saviour. I'll no listen to you one minute." "Well, listen to these children, if you won't listen to me. I won't say a word. Just you answer or explain what they read; and, lest there be any difference between your Bible and ours, we'll send over to the house for your Bible, if you like." "Weel, ye are a bold aye, to be sure," said the publican. "Children," said our young friend, "just read us some passages from your Bibles that speak about drink, and those who use it." Up got one little one, and read—Judges xiii., 4—"Now, therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor 'strong drink."

Another—Prov. xx., 1—"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

Another—Isaiah v., 22—"Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink."

Another—Habakuk ii., 15—"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also."

Another—Romans xiv., 21—"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

Another—1 Cor. vi., 10—"Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Another—Deut. xxxii., 33—"Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps."

Another—Prov. xxiii., 20—"Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh."

Another—Prov. xxiii., 31, 32—"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

Another—Matt. v., 13—"And lead us not into temptation."

In the midst of much interruption and angry gesticulation from the innkeeper, the children kept pouring out verse after verse, till, losing all patience, he went forward and seized his children, and ordered them out of the place. This was more than the rest of the little ones could quietly bear; and they clapped with their hands and cried, "Ah, ye can't say the Bible's on your side now at any rate."

The young ones soon spread the news of what had taken place, and next day the whole country side seemed to be interested in the matter. Fathers, mothers, teacher, minister, doctor, and all, in short, were very soon interested in the dispute; drunkards took it up too, and the fruits of this humble effort were soon afterwards seen in flourishing juvenile abstinence societies within several miles of the place where this interesting meeting of the "Shearer Lassie" was held.—*Readings of the British League of Juvenile Abstainers.*