

## The Beginning and the End.

A TRAMP asked for a free drink in a high-class saloon. The request was granted and when in the act of drinking the proffered beverage, one of the young men present exclaimed:—

"Stop! Make us a speech. It is a poor liquor that doesn't unloosen a man's tongue." The tramp hastily swallowed the drink, and as the liquor coursed through his blood, he straightened himself and stood before them with a grace and dignity that all his rags and dirt could not obscure.

"Gentlemen," he said. "I look to-night at you and myself, and it seems to me that I look upon the picture of my lost manhood. This bloated face was once as young and handsome as yours. This shambling figure once walked as proudly as yours, a man in the world of men. I, too, once had a home and friends and position. I had a wife as beautiful as an artist's dream, and I dropped the priceless pearl of her honour and respect in the wine-cup, Cleopatra-like, saw it dissolve and quaffed it down in the brimming draught. I had children as sweet and as lovely as the flowers of Spring, and saw them fade and die under the blighting curses of a drunken father. I had a home where love lit the flame upon the altar and ministered before it, and I put out the holy fire, and darkness and desolation reigned in its stead. I had aspirations and ambitions that soared as high as the morning star, and broke and bruised their beautiful wings, and at last strangled them, that I might be tortured with their cries no more. To-day I am a husband without a wife, a father without a child, a tramp with no home to call his own, a man in whom every good impulse is dead. And all swallowed up in the maelstrom of drink."

The tramp ceased speaking. The glass fell from his nerveless fingers and shivered into a thousand fragments on the floor. The swinging doors pushed open and shut again, and when the little group about the bar looked up the tramp was gone.—*The Alliance Record.*

## Alcohol is a Brain Poison.

It is so to all intents and purposes. It seizes, with its disorganizing energy, upon that mysterious part whose steady and undisturbed action holds man in true and responsible relations with his family, with society and with God, and it is this fearful part that gives to government and society their

tremendous interests on the question. Is not society, is not every individual who makes, sells, or patronizes the use of alcohol and leads the wretch to temptation and death, responsible? Must not alcohol be a subject of law? Surely it must. There has always been a jurisprudence of alcohol; there is still, and the necessity for it will continue. But the demand of the age is for a new, a higher and juster legislation, for more thorough and potential law, through which the most ubiquitous and omnipotent energy of government shall be expressed for the protection of society.—*E. L. Youmans, founder of the Popular Science Monthly.*

## A Born Abstainer.

A TRUE INCIDENT.

Dr. Z———was giving a small dinner some few months back, and Madame Y———, one of the guests, refused wine. Seated by her host, he at once remarked on her doing so.

"No wine, Madame! said he. "Are you a total abstainer, then? with a little quizzical smile.

"Yes!" replied she, "I was born a water drinker, moreover."

"Well! I should hope we were all that," was the Doctor's amused reply.

"I beg your pardon—far from it," earnestly said Madame Y———. "Do you mean to tell me that the children of confirmed drunkards, or even of habitual drinkers, can claim to be born teetotalers?"

There was a slight pause, whilst the attention of several near was arrested by the question.

Doctor Z———bowed courteously to her.

"You are perfectly right, Madame! We are not all born abstainers—the greater the pity for us!"—*Beatrice Matthews, in Wings.*

The following story, says *The Christian Advocate*, comes to us from the other side of the Atlantic: "A great manufacturing company in Massachusetts recently paid its workmen on Saturday evening seven hundred ten-dollar bills, each bill being marked. By the following Tuesday four hundred and ten of these marked bills were deposited in the bank by the saloon-keepers of the town. Four thousand and one hundred dollars had passed from the hands of workmen on Saturday night and Sunday, and left them nothing to show for this great sum of money but headaches and poverty in their homes.



## A Christmas Song.

BY KATHERINE LENTE STEVENSON.

Oh, Thou who, with toil-hardened hands  
Taught men who toiled the worth of life,  
Teach us to-day; let our souls hear  
Thy words ring clearly o'er our strife.  
Speak once again:—"Life's more than meat,  
The body more than raiment fair;  
The soul of service unto man  
Is more than creed, or psalm, or prayer."  
So much we have forgotten, Lord,  
We rear vast domes unto Thy name;  
We build our Church walls broad and high,  
They hide, from us, our deepest shame.  
Daily, O Christ, Thou'rt crucified—  
We fix the nails and point the spear;  
Wherever wrong is done to man,  
Oh, man's own Man, Thou'rt needed there.  
And yet, again, we hear Thee say:  
"Father, they know not what they do."  
Oh, heart of pity, infinite,  
Forgive us that these words are true.  
Open our eyes, that we may see;  
Unstop our ears, that we may hear;  
Quicken our soul's sense, till it grasps  
The scope of Thy life's purpose here!  
Then fill us with Thy love's own might,  
"Peace and good will," help us to bring;  
Anew incarnated, O Christ,  
Thy Christmas song may all earth sing.

## CONFESSION OF FAITH,

BY JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

Creeds and confessions? High Church or the  
Low?  
I cannot say; but you would vastly please  
us  
If with some pointed Scripture you could show  
To which of these belonged the Saviour,  
Jesus.  
I think to all or none. Not curious creeds  
Or ordered forms of churchly rule He taught,  
But soul of love that blossomed into deeds,  
With human good and human blessing  
fraught.  
On me, nor priest, nor presbyter, nor pope,  
Bishop, nor dean, may stamp a party name;  
But Jesus with His largely human scope.  
The service of my human life may claim.  
Let prideful priests do battle about creeds,  
The church is mine that does most Christ-  
like deeds.

Old Christmas fare did not include the modern Christmas bird—the turkey—a roasted peacock taking its place on the festive board.

In feudal times the boar's-head was the distinguishing Christmas dish. It was served on a gold or silver dish, and brought in to a flourish of trumpets.

The Christmas tree is quite a modern innovation, so far as Christian England is concerned. It has only been introduced during the present century, and was brought over from the continent.