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THE BOTTLE

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THE BOTTLE

BY

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CHAPTER 1

WOE!

One of the most solemn verses in the Word of God is found in Habakkuk. How any one, after reading it, can even obtain their consent to open a saloon or invite a fellow-creature to partake of vinous or alcoholic drinks is a mystery to the writer. The verse alone is enough to bar every saloon door and palsy the hand of every Drinker and Treater in the land. Here it is — “Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him.”

I stress the word “Woe.” It is a solemn word whenever and wherever heard and falling from certain lips becomes awful and terrifying. Suppose a person should suddenly confront you, and with solemn look and voice, utter the words, “Woe unto you!” There would be a sinking in the heart, a sudden fearfulness of the soul in spite of all effort at self-restraint. Josephus tells us that during the siege of Jerusalem a man, wild-eyed and ghastly-faced, with streaming hair and garments, would rush through the streets of the doomed city, crying: “Woe, woe, unto Jerusalem.” It fell, says the historian, with saddening and horrifying power on the people. It is unquestionably a gloomy word, and one we care not to have directed to us by any man. And yet better for you and me, that every one we meet should say, “Woe unto you,” a thousand times than that God should say it once. Better that the entire nation with its millions of people should spend the next fifty years in saying this of you and me — “Woe, woe, unto you,” than God should utter it a single time. The nation may not have the power to fulfill and execute the woe, but when God says Woe he can bring to pass that which he threatens.

He said it once at Capernaum when it lay rich and beautiful by the sea, “Woe unto thee Capernaum — thou shalt be brought down.” And the woe came. And now read what the traveler says about the place as he stumbles amid its ruins: “Perhaps this is Capernaum — but it is doubtful.”

“Woe to Babylon!” said God at the time of its vast stretch of empire, and outspread of beauty, when its hanging gardens were the wonder of the world, and its walls one hundred feet high made it impregnable. And the woe came, and now the traveler, the antiquarian and the man of science grope amid scattered ruins and hillocks of earth and rubbish and say: “Perhaps this is the site of Babylon.” The woe of God came, and it is desolation and destruction in their fullness.

A woe uttered by God against a man means as fearful a ruin and catastrophe to the creature as it did to the city.

Are you not ready to tremble at the bare thought of such a woe uttered by the lips of the Deity against you! And yet, fearful as is the thought, God does utter and hurl this calamity at certain men. Woe to the man who will cause his neighbor to drink and will in any way put the bottle to his lips. God over-arches every such man in this terrible sentence, with a canopy of judgment under which to walk. Verily it seems to me that if I was in the liquor business, I would never cease trembling until I had thrown myself out of and away from it, and forever. The woe will come to such a man, and does come. Of the woe in eternity I cannot speak, but the woe in time is dreadful enough in itself. It comes to the man’s home, and to the man’s children, and to the man’s body, and to his mind, and to his soul; wherever it comes there is heartache and misery.

I recall now a certain conspicuous house in a town where I was once pastor. The place could be seen for miles as it lifted itself up proudly from sweeping walks and shrubbery. “To whom does it belong?” was my question when I first saw it. The reply was, It was built by a saloon-keeper, but he scarce had entered upon its possession and enjoyment, before calamity rushed down upon him, and he today is a tramp and beggar in a distant state.

CHAPTER 2

THE BOTTLE

The word bottle has become a synonym for the wretched and direful consequence it has produced. It stands associated with, and thereby recalls some of the saddest and most fearful experiences of human life. Just as a playing card recalls the gambling den with its dark and blood curdling history; as a dagger brings to mind the suicide, the murder, and the vendetta of Italy; so the bottle brings back and up a ghastly collection of wringing hands, flowing tears, spurting blood, cruel blows, curses of men, moans of women, and cries of hurt and frightened and starving children.

The word bottle is a synonym for pain and misery and despair and death. Many a woman would rather play with a venomous serpent, or handle a rope that had hung a thousand men, than to look at or touch for a single instant a bottle that has held liquor.

I marvel at the taste of some ladies who border and ornament their flower beds and garden walks with bottles stuck in the ground. Not to speak of the associations started in the mind, there is sometimes a grisly sense of the ridiculous aroused as well. There have been times, when as a pastor I have walked up the bottle fringed path, that this swift question darted into my mind: "I wonder if the gentleman of the house keeps account of his alcoholic failings, and has stuck a bottle in the ground every time he got drunk?" Ladies pull the bottles up and stop strange thoughts that arise in the mind of the visitor!

In a certain town where I was stationed, there resided a man given greatly to drink. One night, by reason of a high wind, his chimney was blown down. As I walked out next morning I had a full view of the gable end of his house, and there against the end of his house was the shape of the chimney outlined against the wall. The chimney was gone, but the form and shape of it was left; and lo! the shape was exactly that of a bottle! It was an exquisite piece of satire, wrought out by the discoloration of the atmosphere and the sweep of the storm. It was a fulfillment of the word,

that “There is nothing hid but shall be made known.” It was one of those judgments and retributions that leaps from an invisible hand and strikes where sin tries to conceal itself. No one could look that way at the chimneyless house without a smile. The man’s shame and hidden practices were symbolically drawn by Nature on the wall of his house.

Oh these secret practices behind the front door! these bottles hidden by the protecting chimney of the house! The day is coming, even in this life, when suddenly all shall be revealed and the drinker shall be known to all.

So the bottle is, a suggestive object, and much more than people suspect. It holds the history of its doings and declares its nature and work by its shape. Let me prove it to you by the following pictures of a black whisky bottle.

[Transcriber Note: In this portion of the booklet, the author placed drawings of the bottle in various shapes, depicting it in different likenesses.]

First, is seen the disproportion between the head and body. Please extend the thought from the bottle to the drinker. The same disproportion is seen. Not only is it so in physical way that we see the stomach enlarging at the expense of the other parts of the form, but it is true in a higher and deeper sense. The body is magnified at the expense of the mind. The physical man, the lower appetites are wonderfully enlarged, while the intellectual and spiritual natures are reduced to a minimum. Ponderous is the flesh and little is the spirit, and great is the body and small is the head of a man who takes to the bottle whose picture is before you.

Now look, and it is a Chimney. And what a chimney! What has not been consumed in it? What fires have raged! What burnings and conflagrations of passion! What destruction of body and soul! We read of the fiery furnace into which was cast the three Hebrew children; but into this furnace, or chimney of hell, the children of every home and nation are being cast, and being burned up by thousands and millions.

Look again, and this time it is upside down, and it is a Cyclone. If you study it a moment you will see that it has the shape of a cyclone, large at the top and small at the bottom. You will also remember that the dangerous part of the cyclone is the small part; and it is so with the bottle.

It is the small part that produces such great destruction. We talk with concern and pain about the dreadful sweep of the cyclone. When one sweeps over a village or a city the papers are filled with the gloomy account of one hundred homes destroyed, and fifty lives destroyed. And yet here is a cyclone that is sweeping over the entire nation day and night, without ceasing, and destroying tens of thousands of homes, and putting in the grave one hundred thousand men every year; and the papers are silent, and no one seems to be grieved or shocked over the matter.

Again I shift the position of the bottle, and now it is a Bludgeon. Ah, my friends, I have seen it beat down the noblest in the land. Bill Sykes with his club beat to death one woman who loved him fervently: but this bludgeon when in the hand of drunken husbands and sons, beats down into the grave women, that cannot be numbered for multitude. Look at it! I have seen it beat the light out of the face, and the smile from the lip, and the hope from the heart, and the health from the body, and the trust from the soul, and the manhood from the character, until there was nothing left but a shapeless moral wreck.

Again I shift the position of the bottle, and it becomes a Rifled Cannon. Men dread cannon. At Waterloo whole ranks and files of soldiery went down before the death-dealing artillery of that fearful day. But what has the cannon at Waterloo done compared to the death and destruction produced by the engine of ruin before us.

In St. Louis there are two thousand Batteries, and a thousand of these Rifled Cannon in each Battery, and they are shooting all the time, and killing all the time. The dead fall down in the streets, and in the homes, and even in the churches of the city. The Federals when they besieged and shelled the city never hurt the people as they are being hurt now with these dark guns of sin and Satan. Think of the millions of these black cannon turned upon the houses and manhood of our country! Do you wonder that one hundred thousand are slain every year?

Again I change the position of the bottle, and it becomes a Juggernaut. The Juggernaut of India has crushed its thousands. But look at this one — it is rolling over the land bearing down all before it, crushing, mangling, and destroying so many that the heart fairly sickens, and the eyes refuse to look any longer.

And now I insert a corkscrew into the bottle which I turn upside down. In this position it has become a Wine Glass. Nearly every society, and fraternity and religion has its cup. Friendship has its glass. Hospitality and kindness each have their cups. And Satan has his. It was designed and fashioned in hell, but filled on earth. It is here before you. It is the cup of a quenchless sorrow, and an everlasting death. Satan is pressing it to the lips of millions in our land today.

He that drinks of this glass forgets that he came from God, and that he is going back to God. He forgets that he has a soul. Forgets duty, and the Day of Judgment, and eternity, and, more than all, forgets God. He forgets all that he should remember, and remembers only to drink of that which is steadily ruining him, soul and body. May God save our people from drinking of this cup of death and despair.

Again we change the position of the bottle, and it is a Spade. This is the spade that digs down the foundations of our homes, so that they fall into wreck and ruin. It is the spade that dug the graves of the brilliant Edgar A. Poe and the silver-tongued Prentiss, before the world was ready for them to go.

I have seen spades that have prepared the resting place of at least a thousand people, but here is one that opens up graves for one hundred thousand in this country only, every year. What has it done in other lands besides?

Finally I remove the corkscrew, and in so doing break off a portion of the neck. And now the bottle is a Tombstone. It is a monument of black marble, with a broken shaft. On it I trace the words, "Sacred to the memory" — of departed health, and happiness, and usefulness, and goodness. "Sacred to the memory" — of a life gone forever, and a soul lost eternally. Should it read "sacred," or "cursed?"

CHAPTER 3

THE PEOPLE WHO OFFER THE BOTTLE TO OTHERS

The first class I mention is composed of Parents.

Nothing amazes me more than this fact: that mindful as these parents must be of the danger of example, the power of habit, the slavery of appetite, the dominion of drink, and the history of the downfall of millions; that they should be found placing on table and sideboard, in full sight and reach of the child, a liquid that has ruined its millions, and is destined to destroy as many more. When we remember that so many drunkards have dated the beginning of their fall to the glass of wine or eggnog at home, given by a father's or a mother's hand, we are especially made to wonder.

I would sooner think of coiling an adder, that had slain thousands, among the school-books of my children, or of placing it on the center table where gather nightly the family, than to do this thoughtless, dangerous, murderous thing.

We are all familiar with the excuses given for the presence of the wine glass at home. That it is best to hide nothing from the children; best not to interdict and prohibit, for fear of increasing their desire for the banished drink; best that they should have a little now, and so become accustomed to the evil. All this sounds plausible, but is not sensible, or true, or scriptural. Experience teaches that it is best to hide many things from the children; best that they should be kept from all the evil possible; while the Bible says, "touch not, taste not, handle not," and in another place says, "look not on the wine when it is red." The trouble is, the constant contact with wrong blunts the moral sensibilities, and there is such a thing as becoming so familiar with certain evil practices that they finally seem all right. It must never be forgotten that if the drunkard had never taken his first drink he would never have become a sot.

The last person to throw a temptation before child is a parent. So, at least, it seems to me.

I recall a gentleman in Mississippi who believed, he said, in keeping back nothing from his children — not even whisky. So the cellar-door stood open, in which a barrel of liquor was on tap, and the boys were allowed to drink as often as they desired. And now let me tell you as one result of this putting the bottle to the lips of these sons, that I have seen this man's boys, four in number, all staggering down to drunkards' graves and a drunkard's hell.

A second offerer of the bottle is the Treater.

Do you know this character? Beyond all question, the most, senseless of men. He cannot meet a fellow immortal without begging him to introduce into his body a liquid poison that is known to ruin soul and body.

According to this custom two men cannot meet, after a short or long absence, without taking poison; they cannot part without doing the same; they cannot transact the smallest piece of business, or talk over old times, or effect a reconciliation, or be introduced to a stranger, without insisting at once on each other partaking of a stuff that has opened more graves, ruined more people, and damned more souls than all the other agencies of hell put together.

The custom once prevailed greatly in our Southland. On every sideboard would be seen the decanter and glass. It was nothing thought of in those days. But God thought something of it, and said: "Woe to the man who thus puts the bottle to his neighbor's lips."

Sometimes it seems to me, as I have viewed the sufferings of our country, its long struggle with poverty, and oppression, and calamity, that the woe has come. It is bound to come. The individual or community that does this forbidden thing shall have woe enough, for God has spoken the word.

A third bottle presenter is the Physician.

You and I would stand aghast if we knew how many men had been made drunkards by prescriptions — written by individuals with the M. D. attached to their names. If the letter A. could be inserted between the M. D., it would better describe them. Alcohol is not a creation of God, but is

the result of rottenness and putrefaction. It is the perversion of God's gifts of grain and fruit, as sin is the perversion of the moral powers. God does not desire a perverted thing, or the result of decomposition to be introduced into the bodies of his creatures. He has given us stimulants that are of pure birth, and have no heart-rending history. We rejoice that a noble band of physicians, broad, learned and scientific, are coming to the front, and telling the people that we are not dependent on alcohol as a stimulant in the case of disease.

A fourth bottle offerer is the Seller.

We have over one million men in the United States connected with the rum-selling business. One hundred thousand ministers of the Gospel trying to lift men up to Heaven, and one million dealers in alcohol trying to drag men down to Hell. In New Orleans there are several thousand saloons over against one hundred churches. Does any one wonder what is the matter with the country, and marvel at the poverty and distress so general?

One million of men are banded together by a common business, and by organizations as well, to thrust into the bodies of our fellow-men a substance that leads invariably to undoing of soul and body; which produces nine-tenths of the crime, and fully its proportion of the sorrow of the land. They prosper as others suffer. They fatten and grow rich on other men's ruin. Their houses are built out of the remains of the homes destroyed by their business. The thrones of social, political, and financial power on which they sit and rule, are constructed out of the skulls and bones of their fellow-creatures, and they thrive just in proportion as drunkards increase and human misery is magnified. What a life to lead, what a business to follow, what an influence to wield, and what a curse to bring upon the race to which they belong. Woe to them says the Almighty; and the woe comes!

The fifth class of bottle offerers is found in the Legislature.

Here is the last hand to present the bottle to the lips of the people. The best interests of the State forbid the deed. A child can see that it is best for any government to have as its citizens an able-bodied people, and that any

course pursued by the general government that saps the mental and physical vigor of the citizenship is suicidal, and is to be condemned.

Every government should be patriarchal in its spirit and character. Men are coming to see now that the best government is on this order — one that cherishes and protects. And yet, fearful to say, every state and nation under the sun gives the right to certain men, on payment of so many dollars, to sell to the people a poison that impairs the mind, diseases the body, destroys labor, consumes property, desolates countless homes, kills one hundred thousand people every year, pauperizes many more, and destroys souls without number. If a few wolves and panthers break over the border and kill several of the settlers the government becomes horror stricken, and at once passes a law affecting the lives of the animals, and offers so much bounty on every skin or skull obtained from the deadly encroachers. And yet, here is a rum business that destroys more men in a single year than all the wolves, and panthers, and bears, and lions, and tigers have done since the world begun; and yet, instead of putting such a business under a ban and legislating it out of the country, this beautifully consistent government of ours actually protects the business by law, sanctions it by a license, and flings the flag of the country over it to protect it from the sudden uprising of a public indignation.

In this respect it puts the bottle to human lips. Woe to such a country, says the Almighty, and the woe comes! Comes in its grief-stricken homes, and crying, hungry children, and sad-faced women, and imbruted men. Comes in growing penitentiaries and crowded asylums, and in the wrath and judgment of God. Yes, it comes — is bound to come through the power of violated law, and because, above all, of the Word of God.

CHAPTER 4

FOR WHOSE SAKE THE BOTTLE IS FORBIDDEN

For the sake of the Man who Sells.

Had you thought that the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," was given as much for the murderer as the murdered? God knew the agony of soul, the desperation that would come to the taker of life, and he was thinking of him as well as the victim when he flung about both the restraining words, "Thou shalt not kill." So in regard to this fearful traffic; God knew of the gnawing of the worm of remorse, the coming avalanche of retribution, and the thunderbolt of a solemn and just judgment, certain at last to overtake; and therefore by warning and command he would restrain any man, and all men from this life. If you could have seen as I did once the awful death of a saloon keeper, if you could pierce deeper and see as Christ beholds, the hell into which such men are certain to go unless they repent, you would understand why God holds back by threat and command a man from such an unnatural and woe entailing business.

It is forbidden for the sake of Posterity.

I want you at your earliest convenience to open your lexicon and find the word heredity. After finding it think over the definition and what it suggests to the mind, for a little while. Then have a talk with your physician about the word. Then read Dr. Joseph Cook on Heredity. Next, visit the asylums and hospitals, and as you pass through the wards with an intelligent physician take note of the afflictions that have been poured upon innocent people by drinking parents. By this time you will begin to see why God said put not the bottle to the lip.

But this is not enough. When you take your child on your knee and look into its face, you will notice that it bears the brow of the mother, but has the flashing-eye and the quick, nervous gesture of the father. Remember that these features were transmitted in a negative way to this little smiling

child on your lap, but that a passion or burning appetite would come to its body with the force of an electric thunderbolt.

Now, turn to the Old Testament and read what God says; that “the sin of the father shall be visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation!” Not that God will directly punish a child for the sin of the parent, but nature punishes it, the workings of an immutable law punish it, and the follies and evil habits of the father will reappear, and write themselves clearly and unmistakably in the blood, and bone, and brain of the child. This is what is meant; and God knows the thought is horrible enough to make any drinking man dash down glass and bottle, and vow eternal abstinence. I knew once two young ladies who were sisters. They were daughters of the same mother, but had different fathers. Both of these men were drunkards. The daughter of the first grew up, and in the bloom of a beautiful young womanhood became a nervous wreck. After this came on the scene drunken husband Number Two. His daughter was even lovelier than the other, but just about the same age the same nervous disease came upon her with health-destroying power. It was a spectacle heart-rending to contemplate — two lovely young girls doomed to a life of disease and suffering by the selfish and iniquitous appetites of their fathers.

Did you ever notice that when God would get a great man ready to do a mighty work in the world, that he goes back three or four generations and selects his ancestors, seeing to it that they are physically pure and strong, and out of the yeoman-like father, and grandfather, and great grandfather, he slowly and certainly prepares the body that is to be such a factor in a distant century. He is recognizing most forcibly in this act the truth of his own words, that the iniquity of the father goes down to the children to the third and fourth generation. My readers, you owe your children a sound mind and body as much as you do bread and clothing; and indeed the obligation is most imperative. You may refuse to believe these things and act according to your unbelief; but if you do you might as well get ready for trouble. Get ready for the woe that God says will come. Begin to save up money to pay large physicians' bills, or to send your child off in a few years to some kind of asylum. And if the curse goes to the spirit instead of the body, prepare yourself for most trying and fearful experiences in the realm of character. Look out for living pictures of the ghastliest kind to be

drawn on the canvass of the home life. You think that David's cry was a mournful one, but after you have wailed out, "O, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee," you will realize a depth in the words that you never dreamed of before.

A professor in a certain college was lamenting to me lately his unconquerable disposition to fall asleep when he sat down and was quiet a few minutes. On further questioning he remembered that his father was a hard laboring man, and when he rested would always fall asleep.

A young man of prominent family was again and again detected in the act of theft. The whole thing was horrible, and excited a great wonder in many minds. But on inquiry I discovered that at the very time this boy was begotten the father was engaged in successive acts of theft! Do you call this a coincidence of a certain kind? I call it the coincidence of heredity! Men often wonder at finding thirst for liquors in them, rising up at times with greater strength than at others. Take a glance backward for a single generation in the history of the family and the whole thing will be explained. Look into the innocent faces of your children, and ask yourself how can you consent to bring them into the world and fix and settle upon them for a lifetime such a predisposition and appetite and curse as is found in this alcoholic habit.

Lately, in my reading, I met the following resolutions that were drawn up and offered drinking men for their signatures:

Whereas, I am the father and head of a family, and my children are under my influences, and my habit of drink will be noticed by them, and affect them accordingly; therefore,

Resolved, That I will hereafter drink in the barn with the horses, cows, and hogs.

1st. Because these animals have no souls to be lost, through my example and influence.

2nd. Because they will not tell on me.

3rd. Because by my constant surrender to appetite of the animal within me, I show that I have no soul, and am an animal. Therefore, animals that have no souls are my proper companions under the

circumstances, and so I shall drink in the presence of the cows, and horses, and hogs.

The bottle is forbidden for the sake of the Drunkard.

I read once a sermon called "A Nation on the Seas." The idea was that a million of sailors was a nation. But the drunkards make a greater nation, by a common practice; by common diseases, tears, and sufferings; by a conduct that in a sense ostracizes them; in a word, in various ways they are defined, hedged off from other classes, and by differences and peculiarities become a nation in themselves. One hundred thousand of this nation break through the crust of the grave and fall into eternity every year in the United States alone. The glacier fields move steady to the sea, and there great masses, with loud explosions and crashings, fall into the ocean to float off and disappear. So millions of our countrymen, the manhood of the land, under the curse of drink, move up to the edge of the grave, and suddenly, without noise, with scarcely a sound, ten thousand times ten thousand men fall into the drunkard's grave and the drunkard's hell. What a sloughing off this is from the bone and brawn and life of the nation! One hundred thousand destroyed men means one hundred thousand bereaved homes, and two hundred thousand hands cold in death, that should be busy in shop and field; and one million hearts set to aching and bleeding.

And yet the Government licenses the sale of the poison that does this ghastly work every year.

These drunkards are our fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers. They are under a fearful spell, under the dominion of an unconquerable appetite, under the power, really, of a strange, artificial disease. By it they are being ruined in purse, body, mind, and soul. God says, and reason says, "Take away from them the cause of the ruin." And we would do it, but the United States says, "No; let them have the poison!"

If the White Caps whip a man in one of the Western States the people grow indignant. If the Ku Klux in the far South should at midnight scare some old Negro, what a howl would go up from the North. If a train is wrecked, and a score of people are injured, the papers give startling headlines and columns of heart-rending description of the catastrophe, while they pour out their indignation at the cause of the accident. But here

we have one hundred thousand men killed every year by strong drink; and nothing is thought of it, nothing is said about it, and nothing done to prevent its recurrence. If there was a monster in one part of our state that devoured one hundred men a year, expedition after expedition would be marched to the spot, and there would be no rest in the land until it was destroyed. But while this is so the monster of Alcohol, that kills one hundred thousand a year, is allowed to go free, and not a congressional pen or tongue scarcely lifted or moved against it in just and destructive warfare.

God remembers the drunkards. He sees under all their rags and wretchedness and enslavement the possibilities of a redeemed and glorious manhood; and so to reach, arouse, and save he utters the warning and prohibition. Would that the people, and, above all, the Government, could feel even faintly as He feels, and see as He sees the image of God in every desperate and drink-degraded life in the land.

The bottle is forbidden for the sake of the Government.

Good Government is to be one of the factors in the redemption of the world. God wants us to have it. We never can when whisky flows as it does in our land today.

A certain very thoughtful and prominent person said to me once that the Northern Press was as much under the control of the Liquor Traffic as the New Orleans papers were under the management of the Louisiana State Lottery. The newspapers shape and control public opinion; but mark you, the liquor business controls the papers. What have we then as the unavoidable conclusion, but that the liquor interest is shaping and controlling the country itself.

Take the political meetings and see what power is ruling us through them. In the city of New York, in a certain year not long gone by, there were held 1,002 political meetings. Of these 633 met in saloons, and 87 next door to saloons. Nineteen of these meetings were congressional, 64 for aldermen, and 487 were primaries.

The City Council of New York, composed of 24 aldermen, had among them in a year that shall be nameless, 10 liquor-dealers and 2 ex-rumsellers. What are we to expect in the face of such things as these?

If you had a physician, and he was attending your family in case of sickness, you would not want to detect liquor on his breath; and if you had great interests at stake in the courts you would not want your lawyer to be muddled in brain with the fumes of liquor at such a time. And so when we create legislators, and judges, and officials of various kinds, to make and execute the laws, and to protect and uphold the interests of the country, we want them not to be bedraggled and befuddled, and unfit for the positions they hold; but we want them as God made them, and as God desires them to remain clear in mind, and sound in soul and body.

May God save us as a people from a boozy, maudlin, drunken set of lawmakers and law-executors! There could be no greater calamity to the land.

The bottle is forbidden for the sake of the Home.

Everything depends upon the character and state of the home in a nation. The thoughtful reader of the times — present and past — sees that everything rests upon the home. It is a nation's security, and it is the nation's welfare. Whatever strikes at the home strikes at the true interests of the nation. When France had no home it was a Pandemonium. The tendency to disintegration of every kind in heathendom is found explained in the absence of the home.

Moreover, the home is about the loveliest thing we have on earth. We all feel sad at the sight of a destroyed home. It may be by the storm or the pitiless shame, or by the hands of burglars and robbers; in every instance a pure sorrow wells up at the sight. Doubtless the reader recalls the devastated homestead of Blannerhasset by Aaron Burr. No one ever read the description without a burning indignation against the ruthless man who wrought the disaster.

Whoever and whatever strikes at the welfare, and peace, and existence of the home is the enemy of the country and the human race. That enemy is ALCOHOL. I have said that the bottle was a bludgeon. So it is — the bludgeon that is beating down countless thousands of our homes. I have seen it lifted and fall and beat a three-story home level with the ground. I saw it lifted again and fall upon one of the most gifted men in the South, and while it crushed him, also broke to pieces the family circle. I have seen

it fall again, and it changed, with its repeated blows, the husband into a devil, the wife into an animal, while the image of God was dashed from the features and life of every one of the children. I see its shadow today resting over millions of homes, and it is a descending shadow! As the bludgeon falls the smile is struck from the lip, and the hope from the heart, and the fire from the hearth, and the members from the family circle; and by and by the home goes down with a final and horrible crash. And yet the Government licenses the sale of that which produces all this misery!

The following occurrence is related by a minister, who afterward fell himself under the dominion of drink; There was a gentleman of a certain state who was addicted to liquor. One evening he was returning to his beautiful home in a state of intoxication. His little boy, aged about four, ran down the steps to meet him. The drunken father caught him by the hand, and wheeling him around in a circle suddenly let go of the child's hand. The child staggered off and fell; the sharp triangular edge of one of the marble steps entering his temple. The father went reeling into the house not knowing what he had done. Entering into one of the rooms he fell upon a bed and slumbered heavily through the night. Next morning he suddenly awoke, affected peculiarly by the strange stillness of the house. It was a lovely day that greeted his sight; the birds were twittering in the trees on the lawn; the breeze was lifting and parting the lace curtains at the window; the beautiful sunlight sifted through fluttering leaves fell with checkered and oscillating light and shadow upon the floor. But he could hear no sound, no footfall or voice. Especially he marked the absence of the prattle of his little boy. He called his name, and there was no reply. He called again, and louder, but with no better success. Rising from his bed he walked heavily to the door opening into the hall, and called again the name of his child. As he did so a gentleman appeared at a door opposite, came and took him by the hand, and leading him into the parlor gently removed a white shroud from a little form resting on the center table, and revealed the features of his dead boy! A triangular gash in the temple brought back to him, like a flash of lightning, the scene of the previous evening. With a wild shriek, awful to hear, he asked for his wife; and he was told that she was in the agonies of death! and then he fell — fell as if he had been struck by a bludgeon, and lay like a dead man on the floor. A few weeks from that time he was placed in a lunatic asylum. Another home destroyed!

O the whisky bludgeon! The weapon of hell, the bottle of death that God warns us about! Yet our country, the United States, licenses this man and home destroyer, and declares by its laws that it may stay, and shall stay, and do its deadly and horrible work! The whole land is put under tribute to keep up the Liquor Traffic, and such a tribute! I used to think the bondage of the Israelites was fearful, but reflection and comparison show it to have been child's play alongside the slavery of alcohol. I notice that the Jews were required to furnish clay and straw, but in the bondage laid on us by the liquor business we have to bring our bodies and brains, our children and homes and property and happiness, and, indeed, all that is sacred and precious to the heart of man.

Our people pay nine hundred millions of dollars every year into the coffers of the liquor men; one hundred thousand men die annually because of this business alone, while the fields of our great country are stripped of countless millions of bushels of corn, wheat, and barley, that would feed nations of hungry people, and thus end in great measure human suffering in our midst — and this golden treasure of bread is transformed and perverted by processes of fermentation and rot into a liquid poison that brings crime and disease and sorrow and death all over the land.

“What a bondage and what a tribute!” must be the exclamation of anyone who gives a moment's thought to the matter. To whom does this tribute go? for whose sake are we, as a people, thus made to bleed and suffer and die? The answer is, for the benefit and enrichment of a small class of men mainly foreigners, who are known by the name of liquor dealers. They by law are permitted to fatten on the impoverishment of American citizens. They grow rich while we become poor. They are allowed to make and sell a liquid poison that will ruin the souls and bodies of our children, and we must say nothing. A few are to be made comfortable in temporal circumstances at the expense of many.

I remarked that the liquor-dealers of this country were mainly foreigners. Look in their faces and see the proof. Here is a foreign invasion that our Solons in Congress and legislative halls and editorial rooms fail to recognize. Their cry is constantly for great ships to be built, and great cannon to be bored and pointed toward Europe to keep us safe from the enemy; when lo, Germany has already captured the United States and is

now killing American citizens, not with pistol and sabre, but with the whisky and beer-bottle! Oh the fathomless stupidity of an American lawmaker! We are captured by foreign lands, and pay tribute and the ghastliest tribute — to a few people not born on our soil. Less than a million of foreigners are ruling sixty millions of Americans today. And to keep a handful of saloon-keepers and liquor-sellers rich, we as a great people have to suffer.

I read lately a clipping from a paper that greatly impressed me. It was called “John Jones’ Monument.” It seemed that the above named person started to build one. When he commenced he was worth fifty thousand dollars, and when he completed the memorial he was penniless. He started at nineteen years of age, and at the conclusion of the work was fifty. It took him that long to complete the monument. During all that time he never rested from his labors, but was busy day and night in pulling the work on to completion. In this time his family was altogether neglected, neither did he attend to himself; his clothes became seedy and ragged, his health was impaired, and an appearance of general wretchedness came upon him. After a while, as his fortune melted away, he began selling his furniture and household valuables to carry out his design. Later still he pawned his wife’s dresses and jewels, and even sold the gifts he had bestowed upon her when she was a bride. Finally one night he came into the room where she sat sorrowful by their sick child, and commenced pulling off the bedclothing to carry it to the pawnbroker’s shop. She remonstrated, and his answer was to knock her down with his clenched fist and carry off the covering. That night the child became worse from exposure to cold, and in a day or so died. In another week the mother was buried, a heart-broken woman, by the side of her child.

Neither of these bereavements stopped the monument builder. Indeed, his ardor seemed to increase. Every moment found him at his work. Meantime every friend he had, left him for one reason or another. In the work that abstracted and consumed him, his eyes became bloodshot, his tongue thick, his language degenerated into monosyllables, and these the most fearful oaths. It is curious that all who engage in building such a monument as we now speak of, by and by speak only in a vernacular of profanity and blasphemy.

At last the night arrived when John Jones completed the monument. In some way he scraped together a few cents and bought the last brick and put it in place. It was a cold drizzly night when he finished the work of a lifetime — a work that had cost him fortune, friends, family, health, happiness, and all worth anything in time and eternity. Some one saw him staggering around in the early part of the night, and then he was lost sight of; but later on he was discovered lying stiff and cold in death on the wet pavement with his ghastly face turned up to the dark, cloudy sky, as if he was watching the flight of his soul into eternity. The monument was completed that night! What was the monument? Not a pillar of granite or a shaft of marble. Nothing like that! It stood a handsome three-story, brown-stone front building on one of the fashionable avenues of the city. It had a beautiful flower garden in front, and a tree-dotted lawn on the side. The furniture was rich and massive, the sound of a grand piano stole through the window, the sheen of a tinted lamp flooded the hall, and luxury and comfort appeared on all sides. This was John Jones' monument. It was a house built altogether by his money, not for his family, but for the family of another man. It was the house of the man who had sold John all his whisky. It was the house of a saloon-keeper, built by the money of John Jones!

CHAPTER 5

HOW TO BREAK THE BOTTLE AND END THE CURSE

There are many suggestions and they come from various quarters. Counsel and methods abound. I call attention to three things to be done.

First, let us have Education.

Put the matter in the schools. Let the children find out that alcohol is not a creation of God, but the result of putrefaction. Show them that it is not a proper medicine, that there are just as good stimulants that are at the same time unattended with danger. Demonstrate the fact to them that it is not food: and so far from possessing nourishing qualities, that chemical analysis has demonstrated the fact that in a whole gallon of beer there exists nutriment to the amount of one single grain of wheat! Prove by experiments before their eyes that instead of being a healthy and helpful agent it is a poison! Call their attention to the fact that the human body itself is a prohibitionist; that the instant alcohol enters, every membrane, tissue, member and organ of the body tries to throw it off and out. The very breath endeavors to expel it; the secretions hasten to bear it away, and the stomach, repeatedly in its disgust, endeavors to cast it forth. Finally show them the picture of a drunkard's stomach. I once saw six illustrations of the kind, showing in successive stages the ruin and decay of the organ. The first represented the stomach in the delicate white and pink colors of health; then came the inflammation produced by the first drink; then the angry color of growing intemperance; then the vein-swelling and formation of tubercles: and finally the last picture showed the stomach ulcerated, with cord-like swellings and unsightly projections and protuberances, reminding one more of decaying bark or a fungus-like growth than anything else. One glance at these pictures ought to be enough to make a drunkard sober forever.

Let the children see them, and temperance education go on. If text books on the subject of Temperance and Intemperance would be placed in our day-schools instead of those written by some old sensual, profligate Grecian and Roman of the past, it would be infinitely better for the morals and health of the children, and tell afterwards with mighty effect upon the history of the world.

A second thing we want is Agitation.

Anything is better than stagnation. Some one says Stagnation is the next station to Damnation.

Agitation may be painful but it is what is wanted. Some of you will remember how the end of slavery was brought about. It was effected through much agitation of the question. There were books written, sermons preached and speeches delivered by countless thousands. Then there were songs composed and sung, that exerted a more powerful effect than speech or sermon. I can never forget how as a boy my heart was melted! and mind prepared for Emancipation by the teaching of the Slavery songs. So by all these agencies the very ground under the Institution of Slavery was honeycombed, and so the social and moral evil finally went down with a crash.

Let us in like manner agitate the matter of Temperance. Let us write and talk and sing about it until the sleeping nation can slumber no longer, but will arouse from its moral stupor and sweep the monster evil from the land. Let us so inform and affect the public mind that the saloon power will be as unable to exist in our midst as is Slavery today.

I remember late one night, while at college, hearing a group of students singing in the distance a temperance song called "Father, Come Home." The strain and words floated in through my window, and as they rose and fell on the night-wind the words of the child pleading at the saloon door for her father to return — "Please papa, dear papa, come home," — my mind, heart, and soul surrendered to the song and I became a temperance man from that hour. Turn on a perfect tide of these songs and let us sing them anywhere and everywhere, until our law-makers cannot sleep — until the nation itself shall be stirred and melted and shall arise in its might to put down and out this crying shame, this bitter wrong, this crushing

woe that turns homes into hells and sends innocent, helpless children by thousands into blustering wind-swept, midnight streets; to lives of pain, and sorrow, and shame; and to untimely graves.

Oh, Glorious Land of “the brave and the free;” whose laws are framed to crush out the heart, and hope, and health, and life of its mothers, wives, and children!

Turn on the light I say. Direct the attention of the people to the evil. Sin cannot stand the light, and cannot endure the fixed gaze. The sunrise always sends the worst sinners to their homes and hiding places. The electric light has broken up many a den of iniquity. It was light turned on that shattered the Tammany Ring and laid in its grave the Louisiana State Lottery.

Oliver Wendell Holmes was walking one day over the fields and noticing a large stone, he inserted his walking cane under the edge and prizing it up turned it over on the grass. My! what a scamper there was of lizards scorpions, beetles, and various kinds of creatures that do not like the light.

So let us prize up the stone of silence and secrecy that covers the iniquity of the Rum Traffic; let the light in; let the people see what it is, what it has done, and what it is doing — and I tell you the Saloon and Distillery crowd will be bound to scamper.

And whatever we do, don’ t forget the songs. If the Marseilles Hymn could make a nation spring to arms — even more powerful should be our Temperance songs. France under Despotism never suffered one millionth part as much as has our people under the grinding, crushing heel of the Rum Traffic and Saloon Power.

Third, let us have Prohibition.

I believe in prohibition for several reasons.

First, God believes in it. There was never a greater prohibitionist than the Almighty. There is no local option in His word, and no license to do wrong. Every one of the ten commandments starts out with the words, “Thou shalt not.”

Second, We all believe in it at home. No local option at home or license to injure the house or family. The word to the son is “thou shalt not do this thing or that.” We are all straight-out prohibitionists when it comes to the home government.

Third, The City and the State Government believe in it. Listen, thou shalt not bring the Yellow Fever into our Ports in your ships and cargoes. Thou shalt not disturb the peace. Thou shalt not have certain gambling dens, and Houses of Shame, and Champion Pugilistic encounters in our borders and corporate limits. Almost every law passed declares this belief in and exercise of the right of prohibition.

Fourth, The convicts in the Tennessee Penitentiary believe in it. Several years ago under a proposition made, 500 out of 550 arose to say, “let no more liquor be sold.” After this vote 450 of the number drew a black mark under their names to signify that it was whisky which led them to crime.

Fifth, Because prohibition prohibits. And it is the only thing that does. Don’t believe what the papers tell us concerning the failure of prohibitory laws. One of the best proofs of the their success is that they invariably make the saloon men mad. It stands to reason that if Prohibition did not hurt the liquor interest nothing would be said. There would be great quiet observed and much secret enjoyment on their part at our delusion. They would be the last persons in the world to betray the secret that prohibition failed to prohibit.

Sam Jones’ pet saying applies here, “If you are not hit, what makes you holler.”

But some here say that Prohibition drives the trade into the back-allies instead of exterminating it. To these I say all right — better far in the back-allies than on our streets. It is a thing of death and shame, so let it shrink into dark and foul corners. Let it be hidden from the eyes of our children and families — and be associated in their minds with the darkness and obscurity where it belongs.

Sixth, Because Common Sense pleads for it. Let me give an illustration I heard fall from the lips of a lady. It was a fancy sketch, but not the less powerful. A lady owns a beautiful house. While out on a morning call the spigot is turned by some hand and the water from the City Reservoir

begins to pour down upon the floor, stream in every direction, trickle down the walls, penetrate floor and ceiling, and threaten great ruin. The daughter of the lady discovers the state of things and with an exclamation takes up her pocket-handkerchief and begins to mop up the floor wringing the water out of it through the window, then returning again to sponge up more water and thus spends several hours until her mother returns. When the mother appears and beholds the scene she is transfixed with astonishment, and with rapid steps flies to the spigot, the cause of the whole trouble, turns it off and is at once rid of the worry and danger. The scene needs no explanation. This only we stop to say, that all efforts short of prohibition to stop the flow of liquor in our country is as absurd as the girl's handkerchief-business. The thing we need to do is to turn the spigot! cut off the supply! in a word, prohibit!

Seventh, Because we cannot conscientiously do anything else. How can a man in good conscience vote to license a saloon in our midst whose work is to make drunkards out of our sons.

But says one, my son does not and will not drink.

But what about my boy, and your neighbor's boy, and all the other boys in the land?

Eighth, I believe in prohibition because we cannot safely do anything else. We all know the power of habit, and especially the power of the alcoholic habit; we know the weakness of human nature, and we remember as well that the strongest men of the world have gone down under the whisky appetite. If they fell, what will become of the young inexperienced, and weak? Reason whispers here that the only safety is in prohibition.

Let us look at the matter through the light of a parable which I have hastily invented. In a certain city a tiger got loose from his keeper and began destroying the people right and left. After many lives were lost, and the animal became more ferocious and bloodthirsty as he continued to destroy, the people were suddenly aroused from their apathy, and a convention was called to consider the matter and to agree upon some plan for disposing of the tiger and preventing in future such a terrible loss of life. When the assembly had convened, and speeches were in order, one gentleman arose and said it was his opinion that nothing could be done

with the tiger. That when we came to America the wild animals were here before us and had an equal right to remain. That, moreover, this was a free country and everyone had a right to do just as he pleased. He moved, therefore, that the tiger be allowed the utmost liberty, and be permitted to go on his bloody way. Loud applause from his corner followed this address, and quite a number said that it showed great broadness of mind, not to say catholicity of spirit. At this juncture, from another corner of the room, a second speaker arose, who moved as a substitute for the motion just offered "that the tiger be allowed to remain, but should only be permitted to kill those he could catch." As the mover of the substitute was a strong man and carried a bludgeon in his hand and was, withal, fleet of foot, the speech he made was only received with enthusiasm by those who were strong and fleet like himself. There was a vision before many eyes of faltering age, and helpless childhood, and weak, unarmed natures; and so, a reflecting silence fell on the assembly.

Then a third speaker opened his lips. He moved that, inasmuch as the tiger was killing a great many people, the owner and keeper of the tiger be made to pay a high license for this privilege of tearing to pieces the people of the community. Moreover he moved that one-fourth of the money thus collected should be devoted to the support of the widows and orphans that had been so made by the tiger. Great and continued applause followed this speech and motion. Men said on all sides that it showed not only statesman-like wisdom, but it presented as well the spirit of the philanthropist.

After this, a fourth gentleman addressed the audience. His proposition was to confine the tiger to certain streets and districts. "Let him, for instance," he said, "be allowed to roam on A, B and C streets, but forbidden to be seen on avenues D, E and F." This motion produced a mixed expression of countenance with the hearers; for it is evident, while the D, E and F avenue people felt pleased at the prospect of the tiger deliverance, yet the dwellers on streets A, B and C had nothing but misery and death to look forward to in the future.

Finally a fifth speaker arose. As he stood up he shook like an aspen leaf with excitement. For minutes he stood, without a word, until every eye was fixed upon him, and then suddenly, with the force and the

unexpectedness of an electric thunderbolt, there shot from his lips the words, "Shoot him." The words ran like a current of fire through every vein, and thrilled along every nerve in the audience.

"What right," he vehemently exclaimed, "has any creature to mutilate and destroy us in home and property, and soul and body? What law can make it right? And what license money can compensate for the death and misery produced? There is but one thing to be done at once for the protection and safety of ourselves, families, and country, and that is to kill the tiger — shoot him down without mercy, without the delay of an hour!"

Do you need for me to make the application? Have you not already made it in your minds? The tiger is loose and upon us in the shape of the Liquor Traffic. Fearful is the destruction that it is accomplishing. Myriads are the homes and lives it is annually ruining. In the face of its pitiless work can the question arise for a moment, "What is best to be done?" Is it possible that one can be so lost to reason as to say that the beautiful principle of liberty covers such a case, that freedom is guaranteed such a merciless murderer, and that law was ever intended to protect a being or corporation that spent its energy in destroying human life and happiness?

Could anyone be so debased in moral sentiment as to accept blood money in exchange for ruined lives and homes? Can license money take the place of wrecked manhood, broken family circles, and destroyed souls? God, forbid the thought.

Like the last speaker mentioned we arise trembling and shaking with an indignation too mighty and sacred to be put in words, and cry out with all our strength, "Down with the liquor traffic! Down with this desolator of home, this breaker of woman's health, this destroyer of body and damner of the immortal soul! Down with it now, and down with it forever! Even as it shows no mercy, let no mercy be shown to this unspeakable curse of Hell! Shoot the tiger! End the traffic! Prohibit the curse!"

And it is going to be done. And if the men will not, the women will. Goaded to desperation by the sight of staggering husband and besotted son, and crying children and desolate fireside, they will arise in the resistless might of moral influence and power and, in ways yet to be seen, sweep the dark, foul, murderous, pitiless thing from the land.

An incident that occurred recently in Missouri is remarkably declarative of the growing interest and feeling, and is typical of an outbreak that may occur at any time — a rising up and revolution that will see both sexes represented, and that will make itself felt and heard in court, and street, and home, and legislative hall. A lately married young woman had a bright happy home in a certain town in Missouri. It was a happy home until her husband was enticed from her into occasional drunken sprees through the influence of a neighboring, saloon-keeper. Then came the trouble, known best by thousands of sorrowing wives all over the land. Again and again she was made to hope for reformation the part of her husband, only to have the hope dashed into bitterness by another fall, through the influence of the Man of Liquor. One day as her husband staggered into the house, this little woman, with blood on fire and heart aching with the great wrong done herself and her children, said, with face aflame with a burning indignation, to a lady visitor; “If I had someone else to go with me, I would take a hatchet, go to the saloon where they make my husband drunk and break in the head of every whisky barrel in the place.”

Her visitor, quite as thoroughly aroused, said she would accompany her. And together, with hatchets, they went to the place, and to the profound amazement of men, who stood motionless near by and witnessed the proceeding, this wife with her hatchet broke in the heads of the barrels and let the whisky-tide gush over the floor and pavement into the gutter beyond. Oh, how the papers came out with indignant headlines next morning, protesting against the unprecedented outrage! Had it come to this, they said, that a man’s property was not safe, but could be ruthlessly destroyed by any woman that came along.

Was it not strange that they had never reasoned this way about the wrongs of a woman? Suppose the woman had taken the pen. With far deeper feeling and with much more truth she could have written concerning her lifetime wrongs inflicted by the saloon-keeper and whisky-dealer. My friends; consider her sufferings and wrongs, and then read the paragraph she could write, “Has it come to this, that a woman may not have a quiet, peaceful home, that she cannot be allowed to possess her husband, or have a sober son? Must her happiness be trampled upon, her house turned into a hell, her property and temporal comforts stripped from her, her little ones crying for bread, and all this be done by a money-loving

saloon-keeper, and there be no redress for her? Can any one who will be allowed to blight her life and destroy her home and loved ones, and she be expected to sit silent, accepting it all as her portion?" as the papers said, "Has it come to this?" Yes, verily; it has come to this! And these same women who lift up their voices in protest against this awful wrong done them; who are pleading before audiences and senates and legislatures for their homes and husbands and children, are called monomaniacs and fanatics. According to Aesop, it makes a great difference whose ox is gored.

For a long time the women of the land suffered in silence. They did not know that they could do anything. Prejudice, education and caste all combined to keep them down in their voiceless misery. But the throbbings of their hearts have been sufficient to beat down these barriers, and the women are coming forward to do what the men ought to do and have not done.

It has been said to woman's reproach that she led man astray. Grant that she did, but I believe that it is God's plan to lead man back by the hand of woman. So will the reproach be taken away.

As mother, wife, sister, humanitarian and Christian worker, she is coming forward to do the blessed work. In the Purity movement, in the Peace movement, in the Red Cross movement, in lines of benevolence, and notably in the Temperance movement, I see her coming forward as she never did before. She has been kept back a long time, but can be restrained no more. She has too much at stake to be idle. Her home and children and happiness are all involved, and so she is coming to the front.

Several years since a gentleman took his wife boat-riding on Lake Pontchartrain fully a mile from the shore. Plunging into the waves for a bath, he swam off a considerable distance from the boat, in which his wife sat observant and anxious. She called him repeatedly to return, but he seemed not to hear her. Suddenly on looking back, he saw that while he had swum in one direction, the boat had drifted in another — toward the shore. He made desperate efforts to return, but the boat still drifted and the oars were gone and the anchor did not touch the bottom. He called out to his terrified and shrieking wife, "O, Love, come to me!" But she was one of the helpless kind. With strength of wrist and presence of mind, she

could have ripped up a seat and arrested the movement of the boat and even made headway toward the sinking man. Instead of this she stood in the bow and wrung her hands and cried heart-breakingly. Even as she cried she saw her husband sink before her eyes; with one agonized, helpless farewell look he gazed at her, and sank to rise no more.

Is not this the picture of woman as she once was and as she once did. With husband and son sinking in the floods of intemperance before her eyes, she did nothing but sob and wring her hands in helpless agony. These sinking loved ones were struggling in the toils, sinking in a flood mightier than themselves, and crying out, "O, Love, come to me." But she did nothing, she did not dream that she could do anything. And so she stood by and saw them go down into death and ruin, paralyzed and all but dead herself. But this country has beheld woman waking up. Consciousness of great gifts and abilities and power has come upon her; and in keeping with this discovery, there is a corresponding movement in the life. "Woman to the rescue!" might well be one of the watch-words of the day. She hears now the cry coming up from men struggling in the dark waves of intemperance, and this time she is neither silent nor inactive. Her good works proclaim what she is doing. And over the awful flood-tide of evil I hear her voice answering the cry of sinking husband and son and father, "O, Love, I am coming to you! Along the line of salvation, by sermon and lecture and book and prayer, by every possible agency of good, by law of prohibition, and with the blessings and help of God — O, Love, I am coming to you!"

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