

Hank's Last Drink

How an Habitual Tippler Lost His Appetite.

By ALEXANDER HULL.

I had never really supposed that a confirmed drunkard could reform, at least not without some almost cataclysmic revolution in his life. So when, about three days after my return to Barnesville, I encountered Hank Jones at the door of the First National bank with a book of deposit in his hand, well dressed and sober, I was astonished beyond measure. As I recalled the Hank of three years before, the thing seemed quite impossible.

When I returned home in the afternoon I spoke to my brother Beverly about it.

He began to laugh.

"Do you mean to say you haven't heard how Hank reformed?" I shook my head.

"Why, it was even in the papers," he said.

I protested my ignorance, and then the story came out.

As I said, Hank was really a confirmed toper. Good natured, though, and likable—humorous even when he was at his worst. Perhaps that explained why, in spite of his falling, every one in town was his friend. Of course the Joneses were poor. They couldn't help being under the circumstances. When I left town Hank was out of a job again too. That wasn't anything odd, though, for he was always just out of a job or just on a new one. Every one wanted to help him, and he'd get a new place without much difficulty after he'd promised very faithfully to let up on the drinking. So he'd start in again.

Well, as I said, Hank was out of a job again. People were pretty well worn out with reforming him, and he had some trouble getting a new one. After awhile he got sort of desperate, I guess. He tried nearly every one in town. He swore he'd learned his lesson. "It didn't pay."

But they had tried him, and they had seen, and after all that time even some of the slowest ones had tumbled to the fact that Hank simply couldn't reform. Things got pretty low with the Joneses. Mrs. Jones had been doing washing for a long time in between jobs, and she took it up again now. And then she got sick and had to give that up.

They were all mighty sorry for Mrs. Jones, though, laid up that way and nothing coming in. The worst of it was that you couldn't offer them anything but a job without hurting their feelings, and you couldn't give Hank a job without the risk of ruining your own business.

He had been sober now for nearly three weeks. There was good reason for that. He hadn't any money to get drunk on. He was looking very much worried too. Parson Weeks found him down behind the city lumber yards one day, sitting on a pile of boards and scratching his head disconsolately.

"Parson," said Hank, "do you suppose a man that's backslid as many times as I have stands much of a chance with the Lord any more?"

The parson was sure that he did.

"Well," said Hank, "you know the longest time I ever stayed sober was when I got religion last spring. An' I've been thinkin' it over some, an' I believe I wouldn't have backslid that time if it hadn't a' been for that Lem Higginson, an' you know Lem's left town for this summer. So I've got a notion to come down to the revival to-night an' get religion again"—he looked questioning at the parson—"that is," he concluded, "if you think I've got any show any more."

The parson, to be sure, was somewhat taken aback by this cold blooded proposal of swallowing another dose of religion as you would a cup of Mrs. Weeks' boneset tea, but Hank was so palpably in earnest that, as he said, he hadn't the heart to discourage him. No one had. That was the trouble with a fellow like Hank.

Well, he did go down to services that night, and, furthermore, as he predicted, he got religion. Hank said he felt "just like a new man—all his sinful appetites left behind him once more and his face set toward the rising sun of hope and prosperity." That's what Hank said. But I understand that Parson Weeks and the evangelist had a little conversation of a very different character about him that night after the meeting. You see, they'd both been in the business long enough to know that the easier a man is converted the harder it is to keep him that way. However, that confession did lots for Hank with the general public. Everybody's hope came up again on the bond, and on the strength of it Silas Barker, the station agent, hired Hank as a helper around the S. and A. T. depot.

Everything went well, I guess, for five or six weeks, and Mrs. Jones got better, and Hank went around as happy as a June bride and as regular as a clock at church and prayer meeting.

Then one morning he lurched into the station office from the freight room with a most suspicious unsteadiness of gait and a conspicuous uncertainty of speech. Barker groaned.

He knew it was all off again. Poor Mrs. Jones—yes, and poor Hank too! He gave him a terrific scolding, but to the culprit's surprise he did not fire him, as he had promised upon his first deflection. So he plucked up courage

and persisted in proclaiming himself sober. Barker did not demur. He was waiting to find out where the supply had come from. There was no saloon near the depot, and he was sure that Hank had nothing when he came to work in the morning. So he decided to wait and watch. He went through the freight room at noon while Hank was out for his dinner and found nothing. The station was badly crowded with freight and express packages, but he could find no trace of any bottles. For two or three days the same thing occurred, and Barker became more curious than ever. Hank had not yet struck his usual gait. He was always sober enough to do his work and showed his face with good promptitude every morning at 8 o'clock. He could not be getting anything at home, for Barker had been paying his wages to Mrs. Jones, and she declared she had given him nothing to spend that had not been accounted for. Yet it was plain that he was drinking.

One morning Barker was disturbed by the fourth visit of Dr. Boden to the station.

"Barker," said the doctor, "something's wrong here. That package ought to be here. It ought to have been here long ago. It must be somewhere out in the freight room. They say at the other end of the line that it was shipped over two weeks ago."

"But there's nothing here for you, doctor," protested Barker. "I've gone



"HANK SWORE HE'D LEARNED HIS LESSON"

through the book. Everything's entered right up when it comes in, and it couldn't be here and I not know it. I've gone through the station too."

The doctor grunted disgustedly and started away. Then with a sudden idea he turned.

"See here, Barker," he said, "do you mind letting me look over your book?" "It ain't a bit of use, doctor," persisted Barker, "but you can if you want. I know anybody might make a mistake, but there ain't any this time, I'm sure."

He shoved the book through the window to the doctor.

After a moment the doctor said: "Look here, Barker, what's this? Something came in here twelve days ago, and some one's signed for it, and it wasn't I, either."

Barker looked. Sure enough, some one had signed for a package for Dr. Boden. He looked again. He was puzzled. The writing had a strangely familiar appearance. It really looked a great deal like Hank's homely script under a mask. He had a sudden discomforting suspicion.

"What was in that package, doctor?" he asked uneasily.

To his surprise the doctor reddened with an exaggerated confusion. He hesitated, cleared his throat once or twice and finally answered, "Well, it was a five gallon keg of alcohol."

Barker started.

"Do you know Hank Jones?" he asked. The doctor signified that he did.

"Well," said Barker, "I hope you won't do anything about this. I have a sort of personal interest in Hank. I shouldn't want him to get into trouble with the express company, but I'm afraid you'll find that keg around here somewhere, after all, and you'll find it a little depleted. Hank Jones has been sampling it," he concluded decisively. "I'm sure of it."

"Oh, good Lord!" exclaimed the doctor, with sudden horror in his face. "Do you mean to say he's been drinking it?" Then he stopped and in a moment broke into the most uproarious merriment.

"Look here," he said at last and produced a letter which he lay before Barker. He read:

Dr. Boden, Professor of Anatomy, Barnesville College of Medicine:

My Dear Doctor—I have had a little trouble about securing your specimen, but have finally succeeded in escaping detection. I am expressing it to you in a five gallon keg labeled alcohol, which it really contains, you know, and I hope it reaches you safely in time for your lecture. Let me know. Yours as ever,

THOMAS L. NOLIN.

"Do you know what's in that keg?" demanded the doctor. "Of course you don't. Well, I'm going to tell you, and I'll expect you to keep my secret if I keep yours." He glanced around and then whispered a moment in Barker's ear.

Barker's face underwent the same transformation from horror to mirth. Together they laughed, they roared, they screamed!

"And now," said the doctor, when they had recovered somewhat and had

wiped the tears from their eyes, "we've got to find that keg!"

They went systematically to work, having sent Hank to the bank in the meantime to have him out of the way, and found the keg carefully hidden away under an empty barrel. As Barker had suspected it had been tapped. The mystery of Hank's supply was solved.

"Now," said the doctor as he left, "I want you to send Hank Jones to the college this afternoon before 3 o'clock with that keg. Impress it upon him to be prompt—the lecture begins at 3."

Barker nodded assurance.

Hank was very much put out of countenance when he came back and found the keg upon his desk. He turned suddenly with the remark that he had something to do in the warehouse. Flight was naturally his first impulse on seeing himself discovered.

"Hank," said Barker, detaining him, "I just found that keg of Dr. Boden's this morning, and I wish you'd take it up to the college after the 2:42 this afternoon. He's been down after it several times."

Hank could hardly credit the testimony of his ears. He had expected recriminations, revilings, discharge or even worse when his fault was discovered. Could it be possible that they did not know it yet? To be sure he had been extremely careful in tapping it, but, nevertheless, it plainly showed. Surely they must have seen it. And yet nothing was said.

However if concealment was the word he was very strong for concealment. He would play his part. At 2:45 he made ready to trudge out of the station and up the hill with his heavy load to the college. Barker swore that he heard him sigh regretfully as he carelessly lifted the heavy keg and departed.

Dr. Boden met him at the entrance. "Good!" he exclaimed. "I was afraid you wouldn't be here in time for my lecture, and I needed this for demonstration."

He led the way to the lecture room, where were awaiting them perhaps a dozen students with notebooks in hand. "Sit down for a few minutes," said the doctor to Hank. "You'll be interested in this."

He closed the door, and Hank sank into a chair behind the students, wondering rather uncomfortably what would happen when Dr. Boden found his keg a third emptied, as he judged it must be by this time. But he was in for it now he knew, so he gritted his teeth firmly together and watched while the doctor began skillfully to pry open the head of the keg.

"I have here," began the doctor in the usual formal tones of his lecture—"I have here, gentlemen," he continued as he removed the top and, putting on a pair of rubber gloves, began to grope about in the interior, "a specimen which I have only been able to procure with great difficulty in this secluded place and in ways into which I hope you will not inquire too deeply, a specimen which I know will greatly interest you." And with that he drew forth from the dripping alcohol and held before their eyes—the awful head

of a negro!

Like the Gorgon's head in the hands of conquering Perseus, this horrible thing confronted them with a distorted, frozen grin upon its features. But to the medical students it was as nothing. They gazed upon it with absorbed interest shining in their fascinated eyes.

"Now, gentlemen," pursued the doctor, with a twinkle behind his spectacles as he watched the whitening, horror stricken features of Hank Jones, "we will—"

But he never finished that sentence. There was a stifled sound as of a mortal choking in agony and a dull thud as Hank Jones dropped to the floor in a dead faint.

A few moments sufficed to revive him.

"It is really too bad of me, Mr. Jones," said Dr. Boden. "I should have realized how it might affect one on seeing such a thing for the first time. We physicians grow hardened, and, of course, we don't think of it at all. Only I noticed that you had a great interest in kegs—this one especially—and I thought you ought to know what it contained after taking such good care of it."

It was a cruel revenge for such a little thing as tapping a keg of alcohol.

Hank looked feebly into the doctor's grimly smiling face, but replied never a word.

Half an hour later Barker opened a note which was brought to him by one of the Joneses' neighbor's boys:

Dear Mr. Barker—I don't suppose Hank will be able to work any more this afternoon. He had a severe nervous shock—he was nearly run over by a delivery team on his way from the college and is very much upset. I think he will be all right by morning. MRS. HANK JONES.

Barker read it over again before he sent it by the waiting boy to the college for Dr. Boden. During the afternoon he burst frequently into unexpected fits of laughter over the routine work of the depot and occasioned much wonder among the waiting passengers, who were apparently so constituted mentally as to require a visible cause in the case of sudden hilarity.

Of course the story got out. Stories always do. But Hank was really reformed. As he told his former tempter, Lem Higginson, "he just couldn't ever take a drink again."

"Why, if I was only to think about takin' a drink," he said as he refused the sociable and well meaning offers of that bibulous worthy, "I actually believe I'd die! You can't have any idea how awful it was."

Naturally Lem didn't think it could be so bad as to spoil a man's thirst forever. He didn't think anything could, but then it hadn't happened to Lem.

Nevertheless you see I was right—it does take an unusually hard shock to reform a confirmed toper.

She Wouldn't Discuss It

By EDWARD K. BLUNT

We are apt to consider the suffragist movement a new thing. Its present incentive is new. For half a century women have been entering fields formerly occupied by men, and this has changed them from dependence to independence. But so far back as history speaks women have made efforts to throw off the yoke and act and think for themselves. They have not in past times grown gradually into power. They have usually attempted to grasp and use it all at once unaided by the experience of men.

When, many centuries ago, King Pollock died he left the crown to his daughter, the Princess Miranda. Queen Miranda was one of those women who by nature crave leadership. The queen, who from an early age had been interested in the emancipation of her sex, upon her accession proposed to keep the power in her own hands. She would not be continually consulting persons, as is common with presidents of the United States, nor would she permit her heads of departments to debate with her. But she didn't intend to be autocratic, she said.

What she did intend was not to be beaten bitter and thither like a ship without a rudder. Moreover, she prided herself upon her legal attainments and declared that all her acts should be judicial.

Soon after her accession while the queen was holding an audience her chief justice begged an interview and stated that a certain tax that had been proposed at her instigation was unconstitutional. The queen heard him through to the end—with difficulty—then said to him:

"Your arguments are all wrong. The tax is an excellent one. It will be adopted."

"In what respect, your majesty, are my arguments defective?" asked the chief justice.

"I will not discuss the matter," replied the queen.

The chief justice gave the queen one look of astonishment and withdrew. The minister of foreign affairs entered.

"Your majesty," he said, "our neighbors, the Polyphemians, have demanded an indemnity for an incursion recently made by some of your subjects into their territory whereby much grain and other property were destroyed."

"Give me an account of the matter," said the queen.

The minister narrated the facts, ending up with the statement that the Polyphemians were entitled to be paid for their losses.

"You are all wrong," said the queen. "I am quite familiar with international law, and in this case no indemnity should be paid."

"But, your majesty—"

"I will not discuss the matter."

The foreign minister, who had for many years kept the late king at peace with his neighbors, stood for a moment looking as if the earth had opened before him and was about to swallow him up; then, bowing low, left the royal presence.

The next caller was the minister of state, who desired to dissuade the queen from a bill she had set her heart on. It was to tax bachelors. He received the same replies as the others. The queen said he was all wrong in the matter.

"But your majesty has not heard the reasons why I fear a detrimental effect from this bill if passed."

"Nor do I wish to hear them. That would involve a discussion, and I will not discuss the matter."

The commander in chief of the army came in next. The queen's foreign policy was already showing signs of disturbing her amicable relations with neighboring powers, and, fearing war, he had called with a view to urge an increase of the army.

"I am for peace," was the queen's laconic reply to his arguments.

"But, your majesty, there is an advantage in time of peace prepare!"

The queen cut him short with the usual refusal to discuss the matter, and the general got out like the rest.

It was not long before the minister of internal revenue announced that a mob had gathered to resist the enforcement of the tax she had levied.

The minister of foreign affairs reported that the Polyphemians had given her ambassador his walking papers. The minister of state sent word that nine-tenths of the bachelors of the kingdom had moved across the border into that of the Polyphemians, thus depriving her of their services in case of war and becoming an auxiliary to the king of Polyphemia. The general in chief of the army reported that a war being at hand, he would like instructions as to the disposition of her meager forces.

The only one of these officials the queen replied to was the general in chief, whom she condescended to ask what she had better do. He replied that any opinion from him would be insubordinate, inasmuch as he well knew her majesty was not accustomed to discuss her measures with her heads of departments. Besides, since she was for peace doubtless she had other methods of preserving it than by the unholy method of war.

There was now no time for the queen to "discuss the matter." For the Polyphemians came down with a large army, the vanguard of which was composed of the taxed bachelors. The queen was deposed, and one of the bachelors, the worst old baldheaded, snaggle toothed woman hater among them, was made king.

THE PAINS OF HELL EXPLAINED TO US

The Dangers of Ignorance and Superstition.

Pastor Russell Apologizes for Prevalent Misconceptions of the Bible's Teaching—The Worship of Hypocrisy and Fear, Great Spurs—God Seeks Worship Only From the Reverential and True-Hearted—Popular Misconceptions of Hell—The Injury They Have Done and Are Doing—True Christians Should Awake to True Bible Study.



PASTOR RUSSELL

Paterson, N. J., April 27.—Pastor Russell preached in the Opera House this afternoon. His text was: "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me."—Psalm 116:3.

The Pastor declared that his text, like many other Bible statements, is so grievously misunderstood as to prevent Christian progress. Many noble hearts, he claimed, are famishing for lack of refreshment of God's Truth. The channels of thought are blocked by fossilized errors of the Dark Ages. The ports of our hearts should be deepened and widened by the blowing up of the false and devilish hell doctrines, which hinder us from receiving spiritual nourishment. There exists "a famine for hearing the Word of God."

If this text were the only one mistranslated and misunderstood, he said, the ordinary reader would doubtless pass it by as a figure of speech. But it is merely one of a combination of mistranslations, all of which are connected with an eternal torment system of doctrines invented during the Dark Ages. This power of error is turning intelligent minds away from the Bible. Hence it is our duty to break down these false doctrines, and to clear away whatever hinders the flow of Truth to God's people.

The Psalmist is merely telling of his severe illness, from which by the grace of God he recovered. He would have it understood that it was not merely a slight ailment. Hence he described it as "the sorrows of death"—that is, the sadness associated with the thought that he was about to die, about to leave his friends. In poetic Hebrew, he repeats the thought in the next statement—"the pains of hell gat hold upon me." They were the pains of approaching dissolution. There is not the slightest reference to the future.

Why Not the Whole Truth.

In their revised translation of the Bible, our Baptist friends use the expression, "the underworld," instead of hell. Yet even here is danger that the average reader may not catch the true thought. Far simpler and wiser it would be had the translator said, "the pains of the tomb."

Every learned minister knows that the Hebrew word Sheol really means the grave, the pit, the state of death. Why do they hesitate to tell the people? Why do they translate it sometimes the grave, and other times the underworld? Why do they use the translation, "the underworld," in one place, "the pit" in another, and then refuse to translate it in a third place, giving instead the original word Sheol? Was it their intention to confuse the people? What is the motive? We wish that some of these great men would explain.

The Reason For All This.

We would like to have our ministerial brethren state their reasons for hiding the truth on the subject of hell. Only because they decline to do so, do we feel at liberty to make suggestions. These ministers seem to be of two classes, with slightly different reasons for silence on this subject. They seem to agree that it is dangerous to tell the people that God is really a God of love, and that the doctrine of eternal torment is unscriptural, promulgated during the Dark Ages by men who burned one another at the stake.

The Pastor declared that one class of ministers seem to fear that if people saw the errors of the creeds, they would discredit the ministers who had taught these doctrines. But why fear to tell the truth? Perhaps they fear that people will lose confidence in their teachings, and that the party walls of Christendom, which have so long divided God's people, will fall. Since they will not tell us, we can only surmise.

Other ministers, he said, have become higher critics, and do not believe the Bible. They prefer to pose as believers, and hope for the time when all the wealthy and intelligent will have become believers also. Then they will say, "We have been unbelievers for many years, but have kept it secret, fearing to be misunderstood as opponents of the best interests of society."

The latter class constitutes the greatest menace to law and order, and are Satan's best agents in destroying faith in God's Word. Ingersoll's methods of antagonizing the Bible were far less successful than are those of modern higher critics and evolutionists.

Would it not be wise to inquire to what extent false doctrines are responsible for the increase of wickedness? Will monstrous, unthinkable delusions produce better results than will the simple Message of God's Love!

A Strong Armed Widow

By M. QUAD

1913, by Associated Literary Press.

The town of Grahamsville was a slow town. All outsiders said so, and its citizens readily admitted it.

There was never any need for haste in Grahamsville. Folks died there now and then, but there was always lots of time for holding the funeral.

When this slow and conservative state of affairs had continued for many years the Widow Cameron struck the town, and struck it hard.

The Widow Cameron was forty years old and tall and rawboned. She had a decisive, commanding way with her. She was business. She might have come from Australia or a town only twenty miles away.

Just what the Widow Cameron was going to do was soon public property. She had an acre of ground with the house, and she put 450 chickens at work scratching up the soil and two incubators working overtime. She built her own coops and wire fences.

A roar went up. There had been a time in the history of Grahamsville when every householder had his chickens and his harvest of eggs, but the crowing of roosters had awakened the people hours ahead of time, and by common consent all fowls had been banished. No crows nor clucks nor cackles for the past ten years, and here was the Widow Cameron breeding thousands of them!

Something must be done. Squire Johnson must wait on her and tell her she can't keep chickens. "Of course she can't," said the squire as he started for the widow's house to lay down the rules to her.

"Oh, I can't, eh?" she replied to his oratory.

"No, madam. We are very strict on that point."

"You and the rest of the folks can go to grass."

One of the ministers called to wrestle with her. She held the door against him while he said:

"Madam, our good people are very much exercised over the fact, the fact—"

"That I am raising chickens," she finished. "Well, you tell your good people that if they say much more I will sell my fowls and go to raising skunks for their fur and lie!"

Not another objection came from a citizen. No one was banking to exchange chickens for skunks.

If they kept no hens in Grahamsville they did keep hogs and cows. The animals could run at large and feed themselves. The Widow Cameron gave public notice through the county paper that the owner of any hog or cow that trespassed upon her property would bear something drop.

"She can't mean it!" men said to each other. "Why, our animals have always run at large."

Mr. Schermerhorn's cow broke her way in one night, and at daylight she heard something drop. It was one of her horns. The owner wanted damages, but was told to go to.

Mr. Todd's big spotted hog rooted his way in and got a broken back for his pains. His owner was just foolish enough to call on the widow and try to collect \$8 in cash, and it was over the fence for him.

Solomon Price was a widower who wanted a second wife. Why not capture the Widow Cameron and her chickens and real estate and the money she must have in the bank? Good thing, except that Solomon had had no experience courting widows. Someone had told him that the first move to be made was to chuck the poor thing under the chin. He began that way. In return he received a right hand swing that fractured his jaw, and he went out of the house followed by a No. 8 calfskin shoe.

A tin peddler came along and sold the Widow Cameron some leaky utensils and got away before she discovered the cheat. A week later he returned to the village and was waylaid by his victim and had both eyes put in mourning.

There was a great jangling of three church bells on Sunday forenoons. It was to warn the people that Saturday had passed and Sunday had come and such of the population as cared to could hear a sermon at one of the three churches. No guarantee as to whether the sermon would be good, bad or indifferent. The widow didn't like the jangling, and she got out an injunction and had the bells silenced.

There were dogs in Grahamsville—many dogs. They had come to realize that they must not disturb the peace by fighting. They could growl and bristle as they passed by, but there must be no conflicts to determine which was the better dog. The Widow Cameron went about encouraging dogs of every breed to stand up for their rights and to fight at the drop of the hat. It got so there was a scrap every half hour.

What the Widow Cameron didn't do to the town of Grahamsville could not be told in columns. She woke it up. She bossed it. She terrorized it. She made it over into a rapid town. When it was realized that trade was increasing, strangers coming in and that a railroad was a probability a public meeting was called, and the citizens subscribed \$4,000 and bought the widow out and saw that she left the town. And yet as she went she kicked Hiram Bebee in the shins for cheating her on a load of wood and also cuffed Moses Dewberry up to a peak for saying that she couldn't get married if she had a million dollars back of her.