

# R-I-P-A-N-S

ONE GIVES RELIEF.

**LETTERS TO YOUNG MEN.**

**"Bad Habits,"**

"There's nothing ill can dwell in such temple:  
If the ill spirit have so fair a house  
Good things will strive to dwell with 't."  
—Shakspear.

He that has light within his own clear breast  
May sit i' the centre and enjoy bright day;  
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,  
Benighted walks under the mid day sun."  
—Milton.

It is entirely natural for people to form habits, so that if bad habits be avoided, the good ones will generally take care of themselves.

I had no intention, when I commenced these letters, of saying anything upon dogmatic theology, but I take the liberty of suggesting to those who are interested in this kind of thing that if there be anything that demonstrates total depravity, it is the readiness with which young men imbibe bad habits. I have seen original sin in the shape of "a short six" sticking out of the mouth of a lad of ten years. It is strange what particular pains boys and young men will take to learn to do that which will make them miserable, ruin their health, render them disgusting to their friends and damage their reputation.

Some of the fashionable bad habits of the day are connected with the use of tobacco. Here is a drug that a young man is obliged to become accustomed to before he can tolerate either the taste or the effect of it. It is a rank vegetable poison; and in the unaccustomed animal produces vertigo, faintness, and horrible sickness. Yet young men persevere in the use of it until they can endure it, and then until they love it. They go about the streets with cigars in their mouths, or in society with breath sufficiently offensive to drive all unperverted nostrils before them.

They chew tobacco, roll up huge wads of the vile drug, and stuff their cheeks with them. They ejaculate their saliva upon the sidewalk, in the store, in spittoons which become incorporate stench, in dark corners of railroad cars to stain the white skirts of unsuspecting women; in lecture rooms and churches, upon fences and into stoves that hiss with anger at the insult; and the quids after they are ejected. They are to be found in odd corners, in out of the way places—great boulders, boluses, bulbs.—Horses stumble over them, dogs bark at them; they poison young shade trees and break down the constitutions of sweepers. This may be an exaggeration of the facts, but not of the disgust with which one writes of them. Now young men, just think of this thing! You are born into the world with a sweet breath; at a proper age you acquire a good set of

teeth. Why will you make of one a putrescent exhalation, and the other a set of yellow pegs. A proper description of the habit of chewing tobacco would exhaust the filthy adjectives of the language and spoil the adjectives themselves for further use; and yet, you will acquire the habit, and persist in it after it is acquired. It is very singular that young men will adopt a habit of which every man who is its victim is ashamed.

There is, probably, no tobacco-chewer in the world who would advise a young man to commence this habit. I have never seen a slave of tobacco who did not regret his bondage; yet, against all advice, against nausea and disgust, against cleanliness, against every consideration of health and comfort, thousands every day every year bow down the neck to this drug, and consent to wear its repulsive yoke. They will chew it; they will smoke it in cigars and pipes until their breath is as rank as the breath of a foul beast, and their clothes have the odor of the sewer. Some of them take snuff; cram the fire weed up their nostrils to irritate that subtle sense which rarest flowers were made to feed—in all this working against God, abusing nature, perverting sense, injuring health, planting the seeds of disease, and insulting the decencies of life and the noses of the world.

So much for the nature of the habit; and I would stop here, but for the fact that I am in earnest, and wish to present every motive in my power to prevent young men from forming the habit, or persuade them to abandon it.

The habit of using tobacco is expensive. A clerk on a modest salary has no right to be seen with a cigar in his mouth. Three cigars a day, at five cents apiece amounts to more than fifty dollars a year. Can you afford it. You know you cannot. You know that to do this you will either be compelled to run in debt or steal. Therefore I say that you have no right or business to be seen with a cigar in your mouth. It is presumptive evidence against your moral character.

Did it ever occur to you what you are, what you are made for, whither you are going. That beautiful body of Jesus, in whose construction infinite wisdom exhausted the resources of its ingenuity, is the temple of a soul that shall live for ever, a companion of angels, a searcher into the deep things of God, a being allied in essence to the divine. I say the body is the temple, or the tabernacle, of such a being as this; and what do you think of stuffing the front door of such a building full of the most disgusting weeds that you can find, or setting a slow match to it, or filling the chimney with snuff. It looks to me much like an endeavor to smoke out the tenant, or to insult him

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