

OLD BORN DRUNK.

Or Changing the Filthy Rags of Sin for the
White Robes of Righteousness.

C. E. Cornell.

Someone has said that it requires flesh and bone to make a body, the body and soul to make a man; but that it takes the man and Christ to make a Christian. No man can possibly be a Christian in fact without Jesus Christ dwelling in the heart. His coming into the life is not by accident, but by the volitional choice of the individual. When He does come, the old dispositions, the old inclinations, the old purposes, all pass away; and new desires, new purposes, new inclinations, and new associations, possess the fortunate individual. He is "a new creation." "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." This is a supernatural change—a change from "darkness to light," and from the "power of Satan unto God." Not only are the sins of a lifetime all forgiven, but the "expulsive power of a new affection" predominates, making it possible for the individual to walk in the "ways of righteousness," ever afterward. This wonderful transformation is designated by the Scriptures as the "New Birth." None are Christians apart from the "New Birth."

Modernism and evolution and such higher criticism as might be termed "destructive," cannot furnish a single example of such a glorious change in the heart and life of men and women. These modern skepticisms practically eliminate the supernatural from a religious experience; and when they do so, there is nothing left but dead formalism with no power to resist temptation. Besides, there is no joy to the life; all that makes a Christian experience desirable is eliminated; the heart is left hungry and starved, stranded upon the barren mountains of a Christless modernism. If Christianity has no more to offer than that proposed by the evolutionist, modernist, and higher critic, Christianity is no better than the religions of the East. But, thank God, Christianity has a supernatural Christ in it! He is its very center. Besides it offers soul satisfaction—the joy of the Lord, a peace that passeth understanding, and a glorious hope beyond this vale of tears. No man need jog along with an uncertainty about his relation to God, with a dry, unsatisfactory experience. The words, "Christ in you, the hope of glory," express the largest possible soul satisfaction, happiness under the very pale of disappointment and sorrow, richness in thought and fruitfulness in Christian activity, delightful fellowship with the saints and bright prospects ahead to encourage the soul to never give up.

There is perhaps no more striking illustration of the power of God to transform a soul than that given by Harold Begbie, in his matchless book, "Twice-born Men." This book furnishes example after example of the transformation of those "having no hope, and without God in the world." It is incontrovertible. Let the cold-blooded modernist note Mr. Begbie's description of "Old Born Drunk:"

"This man, the child of frightfully drunken parents, was almost born drunk. He had been taught to drink and had acquired an insatiable appetite for drink

in earliest childhood. He was now, at the age of five or six and forty, habitually drunk—sodden.

"The vileness of his clothing and the unhealthy appearance of his flesh did not strike the adjutant till afterwards. Her whole attention was held in a kind of horror by the aspect of the man's eyes. They were terrible with soullessness. She racks her brain in vain to find words to describe them. She returns again and again to the word stupefied. That is the word that least fails to misrepresent what no language can describe. Stupefied! It was not weakness, not feebleness, not cunning or depravity; but stupor. They were the eyes of a man neither living nor dead; they were the eyes of nothing that had ever lived or could ever die—the eyes of eternal stillborn stupor.

"For the rest he was a true Miserable, lower than anything to be found among barbarous nations, debased almost out of humanity. He was short, thick-set, misshapen, vile; clothed in rags which suffocated those who blundered near to him—a creature whom ragged children mocked with scorn as he passed down the street.

"He occupied a single room, for which he paid seven shillings a week, in a street more notorious for abject destitution than for crime and degradation. She (the adjutant) was not in the least afraid of visiting this place, but when she opened the door of the room—good and angelic as she is—the little adjutant almost turned away. Such a smell issued from the den as stifled the lungs and made the spirit heave and shudder with disgust.

Guy de Maupassant has described the odors of a peasant's domicile with a strength and power of truth which are unforgettable. Something of the same old sour reek, but intensified to loathsomeness by London squalor and slum air, hung like a thick curtain in this den of Old Born Drunk."

This man—if he could be called a man—was finally persuaded to attend the Salvation Army meetings. Here he heard the burning testimonies of those who said they were as low down as they could get. He was persuaded to kneel at the penitent form, where he said, with tears streaming from his weary eyes, "Oh, I want to be like Joe!"—one of the men who had testified.

"Afterwards he said to the adjutant, 'While I was listening to Joe, thinking of what he's been and seeing what he's become, all of a sudden it took me that I'd find God and get him to make me like Joe. . . . While I was kneeling; while I was praying, I felt the Spirit of God come upon me. I said, "O God, make me like Joe!" I knew that I could become like Joe. I know I'm saved.'"

The adjutant had misgivings that Old Born Drunk could not possibly hold out amidst his former companions (he peddled newspapers and went into the public houses) for his temptations would be severe. She broached the matter to him asking him to make a change; but he quietly and confidently said, "I must show them that I am converted."

He lived many years and made a profound impression on that section of London. His former companions tried in

vain to trip him up. They doused him with beer, cajoled and pestered him; but he would not yield. He affirmed that God had taken the appetite for drink away from him entirely.

The little adjutant found him ill one day—dying. He was triumphant. He was ready for the change, and said, "I am without fear." He passed out to be with his adorable Lord. He was snatched from the gutter and restored to humanity; he fought the fight and with the help of God won.

This is the triumph of the Gospel. Jesus Christ is a specialist on hard cases. "Who-soever will may come." Can modernism, evolution, or higher criticism show anything half as magnificent as the conversion of Old Born Drunk? But it is just like our Christ.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear Editor:

Enclosed find my renewal. I wish to say to the Highway family that Jesus is very precious to me. I am resting in him these days, seeking to do his will and trusting the precious blood to keep me clean.

MRS. HOWARD JOYE.

Rev. P. J. Trafton:

Enclosed find my renewal for the Highway. I would like to say for the encouragement of all concerned that "The Highway" is the head of all the papers and periodicals I take. I never take it up but see the golden thread through it lined out by the great Master. I trust and pray that my feet will always be able to follow the hewn path.

W. E. CHIPMAN.

Dear Brother Trafton:

I would like if you would allow me a little space in the Highway. I want to thank you and the many friends and numerous readers of the Highway, for their words of sympathy in my sad bereavement. There are some things in connection with my departed wife's Christian experience that I would like to mention.

She had a definite experience on the line of full salvation, in the baptism with the Holy Ghost at a meeting held in St. John, N. B., years ago by Revs. G. W. MacDonald, Griffith and Mrs. Dr. Murray. While not an extremist she was always ready in her quiet way to testify to that grace and the keeping power of God. While on her bed of sickness she hoped for healing and sent word to Brother Lee Good and Sister Copperthwaite, of Monticello, who prayed for her. Brother G. S. Hilyard and E. W. Lester both visited her during her illness, praying for her, but she finally succumbed to the disease. I now crave the prayers of the readers of the Highway that I may be kept in the love of God and ready for the Masters call at any time.

H. H. COSMAN.

Sin as an act and sin as a state must in the very nature of the case be dealt with in a different way. One must be forgiven and the other purged out or cleansed—two works of grace.