

# A WISE MAN WILL STOP TO CONSIDER, BUT A FOOL WILL NOT.

## Archibald Boyle, or the Infidel Club.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

ABOUT ninety years ago there was in Glasgow a club of gentlemen of the first rank in that city. They met professedly for card playing, but the members were distinguished by such a fearless excess of profligacy as to obtain for it the name of 'THE HELL CLUB.' They gloried in the name they had acquired for themselves, and nothing that could merit it was left untried.

Besides their nightly or weekly meetings, they held a grand annual festival, at which each member endeavored to "outdo all his former outdoings," in drunkenness, blasphemy and licentiousness. Of all who shone on these occasions, none shone so brightly as Archibald Boyle. But, alas! the light that dazzled in him was not "light from Heaven," but from that dread abode which gave name to the vile association which he was to prove his ruin—ruin for time and eternity.

Archibald Boyle had been at one time a youth of the richest promise; being possessed of dazzling talents and fascinating manners. No acquirement was too high for his ability; but unfortunately, there was none too low for his ambition! Educated by a fond and foolishly indulgent mother, he early met in society with members of "THE HELL CLUB." His elegance, wit, gaiety and versatility of talent, united to the gifts of fortune, made him a most desirable victim for them; and a slave, glorying in his bondage, he quickly became. Long before he was five and twenty, he was one of the most accomplished blackguards it could number on its lists. To him what was heaven, hell or eternity? Words—mere words that served no purpose, but to point his blasphemous wit, or vent his execrations! To him what glory was there equal to that of hearing himself pronounced "The very life of the Club?" Alas! there was none; for as soon as man forgets God, who alone can keep him, his understanding becomes darkened, and he glories in that which is his shame.

Yet, while all within that heart was festering in corruption, he retained all his remarkable beauty of face and person, all his external elegance of manner; and continued an acknowledged favorite in the fairest female society of that day.

One night, on retiring to sleep, after returning from one of the annual meetings of the Club, Boyle dreamt that he was still riding, as usual, upon his famous black horse, towards his house—then a country seat embowered in ancient trees, and situated on a hill now built over by the most fashionable part of Glasgow—and that he was suddenly assailed by some one, whose personal appearance he could not, in the gloom of night, discern, but who, seizing the reins, said in a voice apparently accustomed to command: "You must go with me!" "And who are you?" exclaimed Boyle, with a volley of blasphemous execrations, while he struggled to disengage his reins from the intruder's grasp. "That you will see by and by," replied the same voice, in a cold, sneering tone, that thrilled through his very heart. Boyle plunged his spurs into the panting sides of his steed. The noble animal reared and then suddenly darted forward with a speed that nearly deprived his rider of breath; but in vain, in vain!—fleeter than the wind he flew—the mysterious, half-seen guide still before him! Agonized by he knew not what of indescribable horror and awe, Boyle again furiously spurred the gallant horse. It fiercely reared and plunged, he lost his seat and expected at the moment to be dashed to the earth. But not so, for he continued to fall—fall—fall—it appeared to him with an ever-increasing velocity. At length this terrific rapidity of motion abated, and to his amazement and horror, he perceived that his mysterious attendant was close by his side. "Where," he exclaimed, in the frantic energy of despair, "where are you taking me—where am I—where am I going?" "To HELL," replied the same iron voice, and from the depths below, the sound so familiar to his ears was suddenly re-echoed.

"To hell," onward, onward they hurried in the darkness, rendered more horrible still by the conscious presence of his spectral conductor. At length a glimmering light appeared in the distance, and soon increased to a blaze, but as they approached it, in addition to the hideously discordant groans and yells of despair, his ears were assailed with what seemed to be the echoes of frantic revelry. They soon reached an archway, entrance of such stupendous magnificence that all the grandeur of this world seemed in comparison but as the frail and dingy labors of the poor wretch. Within it, what a scene!—too awful to be described. Multitudes, grasping their teeth in the hopelessness of mad despair, cursed the day that gave them birth, while memory, recalling opportunities lost, and memories despised, presented to their fevered mental vision the scenes of their past life. Their fancy still pictured to them the young and lovely moving up and down in the giddy mazes of the midnight dance, the bounding steed, bearing his senseless rider through the excitement of the gaudied race, the intemperate still drawing over the midnight banquet, the gambler bemoaning his folly in bartering his soul for useless gold; while the gambler bewailed, alas! too late, the madness of his choice. Boyle at length perceived that he was surrounded by those whom he had known on earth, but were sometimes mad, each one of them betraying his agony at the bitter recollections of the vain pursuits that had engrossed his time here—time lent to prepare for a far different scene.

Suddenly observing that his unearthly conductor had disappeared, he felt so relieved by his absence that he ventured to address his former friend, Mrs. D—, whom he saw sitting with eyes fixed in intense earnestness, as she was wont on earth, apparently absorbed at her favorite game of loo. "Ha, Mrs. D—! delighted to see you; d'ye know a fellow told me to-night he was bringing me to hell! ha, ha! if this be hell," said he, scoffingly, "what a devilish pleasant place. My good Mrs. D—, for auld lang syne do just stop for one moment, rest and—show me through the pleasure of hell," he was going with a reckless profanity, to add, but with a shriek that seemed to cleave through his very soul, she exclaimed: "Rest! there is no rest in hell," and from interminable vaults, voices as low as thunder, repeated the awful, the heart-withering sound, "THERE IS NO REST IN HELL!"

She hastily unclasped the vest of her gorgeous robe and displayed to his scared and shuddering eye a coil of fiery, living snake—"the worm that never dies"—the worm of accusing conscience, remorse, and despair—writhing, darting, stinging in her bosom; others followed her example, and in every bosom there was a self-inflicted punishment.

In every bosom he saw that which we have no language to describe—no ideas horrid enough even to conceive; for in all he saw the full-grown fruit of the fiend-sown seed of evil passions, voluntarily nourished in the

human soul during its mortal pilgrimage here; and in all he saw Satan lashed and maddened by the serpent-armed hand

Of despair,  
For hell were NOT hell  
If Hope had ever entered there."

And they laughed, for they had laughed on earth at all there is of good and holy. And they sang—profane and blasphemous songs sang they! for they had often done so on earth, at the very hour God claims as His own—the still and midnight hour! And he who, in his vision walked among them in a mortal frame of flesh and blood, felt how inexpressibly more horrible such sounds could be than ever was the wildest shriek of agony on earth.

"These are the pleasures of hell," again assailed his ear, in the same terrific and interminable roll of unearthly sound. He rushed away, but as he fled, he saw those whom he knew must have been dead for thousands of years, still absorbed in the recollections of their sinful pleasures on earth, and toiling on through their eternity of woe. The vivid reminiscences of their godlessness on earth inflicted on them the bitterest pang of their doom in hell.

He saw Maxwell, the former companion of his own boyish profligacy, borne along in incessant movement, mocked by the creations of his frenzied mind, as if intent on still pursuing the headlong chase. "Stop, Harry, stop. Speak to me! Oh, rest one moment!" Scarce had the words been breathed from his faltering lips, when again his terror-stricken ear was stung with the same wild yell of agony, re-echoed by ten thousand thousand voices: "THERE IS NO REST IN HELL!"

Boyle tried to shut his eyes. He found he could not. He threw himself down, but the pavement of hell, as with a living and instinctive movement, rejected him from its surface, and, forced upon his feet, he found himself compelled to gaze with still increasing intensity of horror at the ever-changing, yet ever steady torrent of eternal torment. And this was hell—the scoffer's jest—the byword of the profligate! All at once he perceived that his unearthly conductor was once more by his side. "Take me," shrieked Boyle, "take me from this place. By the living God, whose name I have so often outraged, I adjure thee; take me from this place." "Canst thou still name His name?" Said the fiend, with a hideous sneer: "Go, then; but—in a year and a day, we meet; to part no more!"

Boyle awoke, feeling as if the words of the fiend were traced in letters of living fire upon his heart and brain. Unable from actual bodily ailments to leave his bed for several days, the horrid vision had full time to take effect upon his mind; and many were the pangs of tardy remorse and ill-defined terror that beset his vice-stained soul as he lay in darkness and seclusion, to him so very unusual. He resolved, utterly and forever, to forsake "The Club." Above all, he determined that nothing on earth should tempt him to join the next annual festival. The companions of his licentiousness flocked around him; and finding that his deep dejection of mind did not disappear with his bodily ailment, and that it arose from some cause which disinclined him from seeking or enjoying their accustomed orgies, they became alarmed with the idea of losing "the life of the Club," and they bound themselves by an oath never to desert till they had discovered what was the matter with him, and had cured him of playing the Methodist; for their alarm as to losing the "life of the Club" had been wrought up to the highest pitch by one of their number declaring that, on unexpectedly entering Boyle's room, he detected him in the act of hastily hiding a book, which he actually believed was the Bible.

Alas! had poor Boyle possessed sufficient true moral courage and dignity of character, not to have hidden the Bible, how different might have been his future! but, like many a hopeful youth, he was ashamed to avow his convictions and to take his stand for God, and his ruin was the result.

After a time, one of his confederates, more deeply cunning than the rest, contrived himself of assuming an air of deepest disgust with the world, the Club, and the mode of life they had been pursuing. He affected to seek Boyle's company in a mood of congenial melancholy, and to sympathize in all his feelings. Thus he succeeded in betraying him into a much misplaced confidence as to his dream, and the effect it had upon his mind. The result may readily be guessed. His confidence was betrayed—his feelings of repentance ridiculed; and it will easily be believed, that he who "hid the Bible" had not the nerve to stand the ribald jests of his profligate companions.

We cannot trace the descent, and would not, if we could. Suffice to say, that virtuous resolutions were broken—prayers once offered—all was lost. Yet not lost without such a fell struggle, between the convictions of conscience and the spirit of evil as rung the color from his young cheek, and made him, ere the year was done, a haggard and a grey-haired man.

From the annual meeting he shrunk with an instinctive horror, and made up his mind utterly to avoid it! Well aware of this resolve, his tempters determined he should have no choice. How potent, how active is the spirit of evil! How feeble is unassisted, Christless, unprayerful man! Boyle found himself, he could not tell how, seated at that table on that very day, where he had sworn to himself a thousand and a thousand times nothing on earth should make him sit.

His ears tingled, and his eyes swam, as he listened to the opening sentence of the president's address: "Gentlemen, this is leap year, therefore it is a year and a day since our last annual meeting."

Every nerve in Boyle's body tingled at the ominous, the well-remembered words. His first impulse was to rise and fly; but then—the sneers! the sneers!

How many in this world, as well as poor Boyle, have sold their souls for the dread of a sneer, and dared the wrath of an Almighty and Eternal God rather than encounter the sarcastic curl of a fellow-creature's lip.

He was more than ever pined with wine, applause, and every other species of excitement, but in vain. His mirth, his wit, were like the lurid flames from the bosom of a brooding thunder-cloud, that pass and leave it all darker than before; and his laugh sounded fiendish even to the evil ears that heard it.

The night was gloomy with fitful gusts of chill and howling wind, as Boyle, with fevered nerves and reeling brain, mounted his horse to return home.

The following morning the well-known black steed was found, with saddle and bridle on, quietly grazing by the roadside, about half-way to Boyle's country house, and a few yards from it lay the stiffened corpse of his master.

Reader, although this is but a dream, it is nevertheless, a well authenticated fact; and God, who has the power of communication with the minds of his creatures, did doubtless speak by this dream to poor Archibald Boyle, and through the same dream he now speaks to you.

For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—JOHN III. 16.

Flee from the wrath to come.—MATT. III. 7

### Highwood.

Major Grimes' family left the post, Sunday, for Havana, their future home until this cruel war is over.

Col. Hooten, the Commander of the post is suffering from Cuban fever, but his friends hope it is only temporary.

Major Whipple, the paymaster, made the boys in blue happy Tuesday by giving them generous supplies of greenbacks, silver, etc.

Mrs. Col. Coale, Jr. left Tuesday for an extended visit to Louisville, Ky. That is a lovely city with a cultured and hospitable people.

Quite a delegation of our musi-

cal people attended the musicale in Evanston Tuesday evening and were highly pleased with the entertainment.

Lieut. Madden expects to leave in a few days with a detachment of 8th Cavalry for service in Cuba. They don't expect much if any fighting but they want to help the Cubans get a "constitution" something like Uncle Sam's.

Everybody in Highwood and its extensive environments is well pleased with the election of W. F. Hogan as one of the directors of the Lake County Fair at the annual meeting Wednesday. Mr. Hogan not only devotes time to the fair, but he helps the work along in every possible way. That is what directors are for. November was "baby month"

at the Post. Sons came to R. Shannon, the popular grocer, to Charles Whitney and George Weiss. So many sons is a striking event, but Uncle Sam is calling for men for the army and to man our new navy which Congressman Foss is going to build, and these sons are Fort Sheridan's response to McKinley and Foss' call for men.

Supervisor G. B. Stephens, of Millburn, was over at our jollification meeting Wednesday evening. He is one of the wide-awake, capable men of that locality and a man who makes his influence felt for miles wherever he goes. He is held in high esteem at home and over the county. He made a capital little speech at one of our recent banquets. Highwood's

latch string is out for Mr. Stephens.

The city fathers had an informal meeting Wednesday evening in the Odd Fellows' banquet hall and told Mr. Tetlow, the plumber, to order the pipe for the new four-inch water main up near or by the electric road's power house. If the season holds open long enough it will go in this fall, if not the pipe will keep till early spring. These city fathers are hustlers.

"Eight hours a day." That is what the days are now. Take out time for your breakfast and dinner and reading the NEWS-LETTER how much time is there left to have Horne take your photograph. And they are growing shorter and darker every day. Get your

"picture" at once before the days get shorter and darker, for a good light is necessary for a good picture. Horne can make the photos but he can't make the sunshine.

### THE PIANO CONTEST.

All our readers know that the sagacious, public-spirited publisher of the Waukegan Sun, A. K. Stearns, some months ago offered a fine \$600 upright, seven and one-third octave piano, made by Wing & Sons, of New York, to any fraternal organization, lodge, club or society in Lake county, outside the city of Waukegan, which would turn in the most votes—at 10 cents a vote—in subscriptions to the Sun or job work before December 1, 1900.

The lodges, etc.; all over the county took hold of it with a vim and Publisher Stearns had to put on an extra force of clerks to keep tab on the new business thus secured.

The rivalry was sharp, and the score or more of contestants kept their noses well in line for some weeks, when the North Chicago and Highwood Odd Fellows began to forge ahead, and they kept it for a couple of months, Highwood being half a length and a full length ahead. All at once, however, a month or so ago North Chicago gave a sprint and went to the front more than a length and held her position for some time, while Highwood seemed to slacken, acted as though her "wind" was short. But those who thought our neighbors were sleeping or resting on the oars having given over the contest. They laid low, but they did not sleep, they kept at it day and night till last Friday noon City Clerk Bradley took the noon train for Waukegan with his grip full of votes and going to the "Piano Polls" plunked into the capacious ballot box 3,732 votes, making Highwood's total 6,983, while North Chicago had 6,579, or 404 less than Highwood.

That settled it, the piano belonged to the Odd Fellows of Highwood and great was the joy thereof over their success. Wednesday morning a big dray was sent to Waukegan and the piano hauled home through the mud and installed in their hall ready for the fingers of a skilled musician from Chicago at the evening gathering. It needed no cards of invitation to call together the members of the large lodge; it was the night of their regular meeting. But others were invited, among whom were Mr. Stearns himself, G. B. Stephens, of Millburn, John H. Clarke, of Chicago, Judge Hibbard, of Highland Park, and some others.

During the evening brief speeches were made by Messrs Stearns, Stephens, Hogan and Hibbard congratulating the lodge on its success in winning the piano. A bountiful banquet was served while dancing to the music of their new instrument, was enjoyed by all who wished, and so the evening passed, but we cannot lay down our pen without noting the ease, grace and skill of Editor Stearns as he danced with the blonde belles of Highwood. The music was by Mr. Mullen and his assistant, of Chicago, while Messrs Condon and Rhodes called the dances. Altogether it was a very pleasant occasion.

Be sure you get the eight pages of the NEWS-LETTER this week.