

Iron-Shod.

The safety of a mountain-climber depends upon being well shod. Therefore the Swiss guides wear heavy shoes with spikes in the soles.

On a bright July morning, a famous scientist of England started with two gentlemen to ascend the Piz Morteratsch, a steep and lofty snow-mountain in Switzerland.

Though experienced mountaineers, they took with them Jenni, the boldest guide in that district. After reaching the summit of the Morteratsch, they started back and soon arrived at a steep slope covered with thin snow.

"Keep carefully in my steps, gentlemen," said Jenni, "for a false step here might start the snow, and send us down in an avalanche."

He had scarcely spoken when the field of snow began to slide down the icy mountain side, carrying the unfortunate climbers with it at a terrible pace. A steeper slope was before them, and at the end of it a precipice! The three foremost men were almost buried in the whirling snow. Below them were the jaws of death. Everything depended upon getting a foothold.

Jenni shouted loudly, "Halt, halt!" and with desperate energy, drove his iron-nailed boots into the firm ice beneath the moving snow.

Within a few rods of the precipice, Jenni got a hold with his feet, and was able to bring the party up all standing, when two seconds more would have swept them into the chasm.

This hair-breadth escape shows the value of being well shod when in dangerous places. Life is full of dangerous places, especially for the young. No boy is prepared for rough climbing unless he is well shod with Christian principles. Sometimes temptation ices the track under him, and then he must plant his foot down with an iron heel, or he is gone.

A poor boy of my acquaintance signed a bledge never to taste liquor. One day his rich employer invited him to dinner. There was wine on the table, but the lad was not ashamed to say:

"No thank you, sir. I never touch it!" Then came on a rich pudding, which the boy tasted, and found that there was brandy in it so he quickly laid the tasted morsel back on his plate. The employer discovered that the boy had "plucked" enough to stand by his convictions, and he will never be afraid to trust him. He is a sure-footed boy.

God knows what steep places lie before us. He has provided the "shoes of iron and brass" for us to put on. They are truth, and honesty and faith, and courage, and prayer.

A clear conscience will keep the head cool. And up along the hard road there is a sign-board, on which is written in large bright letters, "He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely."

REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

The Smoker's Car.

Reader, have you ever, either by accident or design, been in the smoking-car of a railroad train well under way? It not, we beg of you to improve the first opportunity to do so. It will enable you to see life in a new phase, and you may possibly learn a lesson from it.

We think we are safe in saying there is no life, either animal or vegetable, less tenacious than that of man, which could continue long within its smoky precincts. Thirty, forty, and sometimes as many as fifty pipes and cigars of all kinds and conditions, in full blast, are giving off their clouds of poisonous smoke, which fills the entire capacity of the car.

Fumigation so thorough would soon clear an infested ship of rats and other vermin. Plants subjected to its influence would be poisoned to death in a short time. A child would be soon suffocated, and strong men, who have not been accustomed to such an atmosphere, would succumb to its poisonous influence.

The human physical organization is of wonderful endurance. We have only to notice the vast amount of poisons, administered by medical advisers in their daily practice, which the system rejects, always with more or less injury, to be convinced of that fact. Without going to extremes for illustrations, we see how tea, coffee, pepper, spices, and other things not natural to man's appetite, or beneficial to his system are, after constant and moderate use, not only received by the system without opposition, but finally a hunger is induced which they alone can satisfy, or which at least it is difficult to overcome. The same may be said of the use of spirituous liquors, arsenic tobacco in its various forms, opium, and many other forms of poisons. Perhaps man was so constituted, expressly to enable him to withstand the poisonous atmosphere of the smoking-car.

The smoking-car may be taken as an illustration of man's moral as well as his physical nature and tendencies. If the doctrine of total depravity, as once taught, was true, we might suppose ourselves born in a spiritual smoking-car, whose cloudy contents were in exact consonance with our unholy condition, and amid which we should revel with the highest enjoyment.

But in these days of more liberal views, we are taught that men are only naturally inclined to evil ways, and readily believe that in our individual cases the inclination is so very little from the perpendicular that there is no danger of a fall. Our neighbor, who indulges in a whole pipeful of sin, may be in danger, but our little cigarette can work no harm. In fact, we see no reason why we should not be allowed to smoke it if we choose.

The little sins are but blossoms of which the larger ones are the fruit, and the season of growth is sometimes exceedingly short. One wrong thought or action is followed by another as readily and inevitably as is the cigarette by the cigar.

The confirmed sot had his first glass of wine, and he who stands lowest in the moral scale, his first departure from the paths of righteousness.

Those who enter it do so from choice. They may be urged or influenced by others, but the decision, the yes or the no, is with them. More or less of the dust of the road will be found on each one of us. We shall not run into the terminal station with our apparel fresh and clean, let us do the best we may; but we can show that we have striven to avoid contamination, and that we have at least kept clear of the abominations of the smoking-car.

Hilling Up Potatoes.

I think that hilling up in the way it is practiced is, as a general rule, injurious, except on very wet land. If land is cultivated properly, and to the right depth, I claim that the crop where no hilling up in the usual way is done will be nearly double that hilled up, because those hilled up do not receive the proper amount of moisture. Should there be abundant rain to suit potatoes planted on the level, it would scarcely reach those in hills. Modern hills are built up as if to ward off all the moisture possible, and compel the poor potato to eke out an existence in a heap of dust. I have often wondered, when opening out a hill, how the potatoes grew at all. My experience in potato growing is that the proper way to plant is on the level, and then after this is done mulch the ground well with some manure, to save as much moisture as possible in the ground. Sometimes it is necessary to draw up a little earth where the tubers are pressing up through the ground, but I would only put on sufficient to cover. In drills I would plant one good seed every fifteen or eighteen inches, and in hills two or three eyes at the most. As a general rule, I think potatoes are planted too thick, and too much seed put into the ground, and very frequently we find people reserving all the small trash of the pit or bin for seed, instead of using the medium-sized potatoes.—Cor. Country Gentleman.

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