

# WAY TO SHILOH

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*Beer Street by William Hogarth*

## Drinking to the Dregs

Taken from John Ploughman's Pictures (by C. H. Spurgeon):

This is about the man who is not a blacksmith, but he has a spark in his throat, and all the publican's barrels can't put it out. Water is this gentleman's abhorrence, whether used inside or out, but most of all he dreads it taken inwardly, except with spirits, and then the less the better. He says that the pump would kill him, but he never gives it a chance. He laps his liquor, and licks his lips, but he will never die through the badness of the water from the well. It is a pity that he does not run the risk. Drinking cold water neither makes a man sick, nor in debt, his wife a widow, but this mighty fine ale of his will do all this for him, make him worse than a beast while he lives, and wash him away to his grave before his time. The old Scotchman said, "Death and drink-draining are near neighbours," he spoke the truth. They say that drunkenness makes some men fools, some beasts, and some devils, but according to my mind it makes all men fools whatever else it does. Yet when a man is as drunk as a rat he sets up to be a judge, and mocks at sober people. Certain neighbours of mine laugh at me for being a teetotaler, and I might well laugh at them for being drunk, only I feel more inclined to cry that they should be such fools. O that we could get them sober, and then perhaps might make men of them. You cannot do much with these fellows, unless you can enlist them in the Coldstream guards.

He that any good would win  
At his mouth must first begin.

As long as drink drowns conscience and reason, you might as well talk to the hogs. The rascals will promise fair and take the pledge, and then take their coats to pledge to get more beer. We smile at a tipsy man, for he is a ridiculous creature, but when we see how he is ruined body and soul it is no joking matter. How solemn is the truth that "No drunkard shall inherit eternal life."

There's nothing too bad for a man to say or do when he is half-seas over. It is a pity that any decent body should go near such a common sewer. If he does not fall into the worst of crimes it certainly is not his fault, for he has made himself ready for anything the devil likes to put into his mind. He does least hurt when he begins to be top-heavy, and to reel about: then he becomes a blind man with good eyes in his head, and a cripple with legs on. He sees two moons, and two doors to the public house, and tries to find his way through both the doors at once. Over he goes, and there he must lie unless somebody will wheel him home in a barrow or carry him to the police-station.

Solomon says the glutton and the drunkard shall come to poverty, and that the drinker does in no time. He gets more and more down at the heel, and as his nose gets redder and his body is more swollen he gets to be more of a shack and more of a shark. His trade is gone, and his credit has run out, but he still manages to get his beer. He treats an old friend to a pot, and then finds that he has left his purse at home, and of course the old friend must pay the shot. He borrows till no one will lend him a groat, unless it is to get off lending a shilling. Shame has long since left him, though all who know him are ashamed of him. His talk runs like the tap, and is full of stale dregs: he is very kind over his beer, and swears he loves you, and would like to drink your health, and love you again. Poor sot, much good will his blessing do to any one who gets it; his poor wife and family have had too much of it already, and quake at the very sound of his voice.

Now, if we try to do anything to shut up a boozing-house, or shorten the hours for guzzling, we are called all sorts of bad names, and the wind-up of it all is- "What! Rob a poor man of his beer?" The fact is that they rob the poor man by his beer. The ale-jug robs the cupboard and the table, starves the wife and strips the children; it is a great thief, housebreaker, and heartbreaker, and the best possible thing is to break it to pieces, or keep it on the shelf bottom upwards.

In a newspaper which was lent me the other day I saw some verses by John Barleycorn, jun., and as they tickled my fancy I copied them out, and here they are.

What! rob a poor man of his beer,  
And give him good victuals instead!  
Your heart's very hard, sir, I fear,  
Or at least you are soft in the head.

What t rob a poor man of his mug,  
And give him a house of his own;  
With kitchen and parlour so snug  
This enough to draw tears from a stone,

What! rob a poor man of his glass,  
And teach him to read and to write!  
What! save him from being an ass!  
'Tis nothing but malice and spite.

What I rob a poor man of his ale,  
And prevent him from beating his wife,  
From being locked up in a jail,  
With penal employment for life!

What! rob a poor man of his beer,  
And keep him from starving his child!  
It makes one feel awful it's clear,  
And I'll thank you to draw it more mild.

Having given you a song, I now hand you a handbill to stick up in the "Rose and Crown" window, if the landlord wants an advertisement. It was written many years ago, but it is quite as good as was. Any beer-seller may print it who thinks it likely to help his trade.

DRUNKARDS, READ THIS!

DRUNKENNESS

EXPELS REASON,  
DISTEMPERS THE BODY,  
DIMINISHES STRENGTH,  
INFLAMES THE BLOOD;

CAUSES { INTERNAL  
EXTERNAL  
ETERNAL  
INCURABLE } WOUNDS;

IS

A WITCH TO THE SENSES,  
A DEMON TO THE SOUL,  
A THIEF TO THE PURSE,  
A GUIDE TO BEGGARY, LECHERY, & VILLAINY.

IT IS

THE WIFE'S WOE, AND  
THE CHILDREN'S SORROW.

MAKES A MAN

WALLOW WORSE THAN A BEAST, AND  
ACT LIKE A FOOL.

HE IS

A SELF-MURDERER;  
WHO DRINKS TO ANOTHER'S GOOD HEALTH,  
AND  
ROBS HIMSELF OF HIS OWN.

**Proverbs 23.**

- <sup>29</sup> Who has woe? Who has sorrow?  
Who has strife? Who has complaints?  
Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes?
- <sup>30</sup> Those who linger over wine,  
who go to sample bowls of mixed wine.
- <sup>31</sup> Do not gaze at wine when it is red,  
when it sparkles in the cup,  
when it goes down smoothly!
- <sup>32</sup> In the end it bites like a snake  
and poisons like a viper.
- <sup>33</sup> Your eyes will see strange sights  
and your mind imagine confusing things.
- <sup>34</sup> You will be like one sleeping on the high seas,  
lying on top of the rigging.
- <sup>35</sup> "They hit me," you will say, "but I'm not hurt!  
They beat me, but I don't feel it!  
When will I wake up  
so I can find another drink?"

William Hogarth's

GIN LANE.

