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[Jack And Jill](#)

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Chapter 19 - Good Templars

"Hi there! Bell's rung! Get up, lazy-bones!" called Frank from his room as the clock struck six one bright morning, and a great creaking and stamping proclaimed that he was astir.

"All right, I'm coming," responded a drowsy voice, and Jack turned over as if to obey; but there the effort ended, and he was off again, for growing lads are hard to rouse, as many a mother knows to her sorrow.

Frank made a beginning on his own toilet, and then took a look at his brother, for the stillness was suspicious.

"I thought so! He told me to wake him, and I guess this will do it;" and, filling his great sponge with water, Frank stalked into the next room and stood over the unconscious victim like a stern executioner, glad to unite business with pleasure in this agreeable manner.

A woman would have relented and tried some milder means, for when his broad shoulders and stout limbs were hidden, Jack looked very young and innocent in his sleep. Even Frank paused a moment to look at the round, rosy face, the curly eyelashes, half-open mouth, and the peaceful expression of a dreaming baby. "I must do it, or he won't be ready for breakfast," said the Spartan brother, and down came the sponge, cold, wet, and choky, as it was briskly rubbed to and fro regardless of every obstacle.

"Come, I say! That's not fair! Leave me alone!" sputtered Jack, hitting out so vigorously that the sponge flew across the room, and Frank fell back to laugh at the indignant sufferer.

"I promised to wake you, and you believe in keeping promises, so I'm doing my best to get you up."

"Well, you needn't pour a quart of water down a fellow's neck, and rub his nose off, need you? I'm awake, so take your old sponge and go along," growled Jack, with one eye open and a mighty gape.

"See that you keep so, then, or I'll come and give you another sort of a rouser," said Frank, retiring well-pleased with his success.

"I shall have one good stretch, if I like. It is strengthening to the muscles, and I'm as stiff as a board with all that football yesterday," murmured Jack, lying down for one delicious moment. He shut the open eye to enjoy it thoroughly, and forgot the stretch altogether, for the bed was warm, the pillow soft, and a half-finished dream still hung about his drowsy brain. Who does not know the fatal charm of that stolen moment - for once yield to it, and one is lost.

Jack was miles away "in the twinkling of a bedpost," and the pleasing dream seemed about to return, when a ruthless hand tore off the clothes, swept him out of bed, and he really did awake to find himself standing in the middle of his bath-pan with both windows open, and Frank about to pour a pail of water over him.

"Hold on! Yah, how cold the water is! Why, I thought I was up;" and, hopping out, Jack rubbed his eyes and looked about with such a genuine surprise that Frank put down the pail, feeling that the deluge would not be needed this time.

"You are now, and I'll see that you keep so," he said, as he stripped the bed and carried off the pillows.

"I don't care. What a jolly day!" and Jack took a little promenade to finish the rousing process.

"You'd better hurry up, or you won't get your chores done before breakfast. No time for a 'go as you please' now," said Frank; and both boys laughed, for it was an old joke of theirs, and rather funny.

Going up to bed one night expecting to find Jack asleep, Frank discovered him tramping round and round the room airily attired in a towel, and so dizzy with his brisk revolutions that as his brother looked he tumbled over and lay panting like a fallen gladiator.

"What on earth are you about?"

"Playing Rowell. Walking for the belt, and I've got it too," laughed Jack, pointing to an old gilt chandelier chain hanging on the bedpost.

"You little noodle, you'd better revolve into bed before you lose your head entirely. I never saw such a fellow for taking himself off his legs."

"Well, if I didn't exercise, do you suppose I should be able to do that - or that?" cried Jack, turning a somersault and striking a fine attitude as he came up, flattering himself that he was the model of a youthful athlete.

"You look more like a clothes-pin than a Hercules," was the crushing reply of this unsympathetic brother, and Jack meekly retired with a bad headache.

"I don't do such silly things now: I'm as broad across the shoulders as you are, and twice as strong on my pins, thanks to my gymnastics. Bet you a cent I'll be dressed first, though you have got the start," said Jack, knowing that Frank always had a protracted wrestle with his collar-buttons, which gave his adversary a great advantage over him.

"Done!" answered Frank, and at it they went. A wild scramble was heard in Jack's room, and a steady tramp in the other as Frank worked away at the stiff collar and the unaccommodating button till every finger ached. A clashing of boots followed, while Jack whistled "Polly Hopkins," and Frank declaimed in his deepest voice,

"Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris Italian, fato profugus, Laviniaque venit litora."

Hair-brushes came next, and here Frank got ahead, for Jack's thick crop would stand straight up on the crown, and only a good wetting and a steady brush would make it lie down.

"Play away, No. 2," called out Frank as he put on his vest, while Jack was still at it with a pair of the stiffest brushes procurable for money.

"Hold hard, No. 11, and don't forget your teeth," answered Jack, who had done his.

Frank took a hasty rub and whisked on his coat, while Jack was picking up the various treasures which had flown out of his pockets as he caught up his roundabout.

"Ready! I'll trouble you for a cent, sonny;" and Frank held out his hand as he appeared equipped for the day.

"You haven't hung up your night-gown, nor aired the bed, nor opened the windows. That's part of the dressing; mother said so. I've got you there, for you did all that for me, except this," and Jack threw his gown over a chair with a triumphant flourish as Frank turned back to leave his room in the order which they had been taught was one of the signs of a good bringing-up in boys as well as girls.

"Ready! I'll trouble you for a cent, old man;" and Jack held out his hand, with a chuckle.

He got the money and a good clap beside; then they retired to the shed to black their boots, after which Frank filled the woodboxes and Jack split kindlings, till the daily allowance was ready. Both went at their lessons for half an hour, Jack scowling over his algebra in the sofa corner, while Frank, with his elbows on and his legs round the little stand which held his books, seemed to be having a wrestling-match with Herodotus.

When the bell rang they were glad to drop the lessons and fall upon their breakfast with the appetite of wolves, especially Jack, who sequestered oatmeal and milk with such rapidity that one would have thought he had a leathern bag hidden somewhere to slip it into, like his famous namesake when he breakfasted with the giant.

"I declare I don't see what he does with it! He really ought not to 'gobble' so, mother," said Frank, who was eating with great deliberation and propriety.

"Never you mind, old quiddle. I'm so hungry I could tuck away a bushel," answered Jack, emptying a glass of milk and holding out his plate for more mush, regardless of his white moustache.

"Temperance in all things is wise, in speech as well as eating and drinking - remember that, boys," said Mamma from behind the urn.

"That reminds me! We promised to do the 'Observer' this week, and here it is Tuesday and I haven't done a thing: have you?" asked Frank.

"Never thought of it. We must look up some bits at noon instead of playing. Dare say Jill has got some: she always saves all she finds for me."

"I have one or two good items, and can do any copying there may be. But I think if you undertake the paper you should give some time and labor to make it good," said Mamma, who was used to this state of affairs, and often edited the little sheet read every week at the Lodge. The boys seldom missed going, but the busy lady was often unable to be there, so helped with the paper as her share of the labor.

"Yes, we ought, but somehow we don't seem to get up much steam about it lately. If more people belonged, and we could have a grand time now and then, it would be jolly;" and Jack sighed at the lack of interest felt by outsiders in the loyal little Lodge which went on year after year kept up by the faithful few.

"I remember when in this very town we used to have a Cold Water Army, and in the summer turn out with processions, banners, and bands of music to march about, and end with a picnic, songs, and speeches in some grove or hall. Nearly all the children belonged to it, and the parents also, and we had fine times here twenty-five or thirty years ago."

"It didn't do much good, seems to me, for people still drink, and we haven't a decent hotel in the place," said Frank, as his mother sat looking out of the window as if she saw again the pleasant sight of old and young working together against the great enemy of home peace and safety.

"Oh yes, it did, my dear; for to this day many of those children are true to their pledge. One little girl was, I am sure, and now has two big boys to fight for the reform she has upheld all her life. The town is better than it was in those days, and if we each do our part faithfully, it will improve yet more. Every boy and girl who joins is one gained, perhaps, and your example is the best temperance lecture you can give. Hold fast, and don't mind if it isn't 'jolly': it is right, and that should be enough for us."

Mamma spoke warmly, for she heartily believed in young people's guarding against this dangerous vice before it became a temptation, and hoped her boys would never break the pledge they had taken; for, young as they were, they were old enough to see its worth, feel its wisdom, and pride themselves on the promise which was fast growing into a principle. Jack's face brightened as he listened, and Frank said, with the steady look which made his face manly, -

"It shall be. Now I'll tell you what I was going to keep as a surprise till to-night, for I wanted to have my secret as well as other folks. Ed and I went up to see Bob, Sunday, and he said he'd join the Lodge, if they'd have him. I'm going to propose him to-night."

"Good! good!" cried Jack, joyfully, and Mrs. Minot clapped her hands, for every new member was rejoiced over by the good people, who were not discouraged by ridicule, indifference, or opposition.

"We've got him now, for no one will object, and it is just the thing for him. He wants to belong somewhere, he says, and he'll enjoy the fun, and the good things will help him, and we will look after him. The Captain was so pleased, and you ought to have seen Ed's face when Bob said, 'I'm ready, if you'll have me.'"

Frank's own face was beaming, and Jack forgot to "gobble," he was so interested in the new convert, while Mamma said, as she threw down her napkin and took up the newspaper, -

"We must not forget our 'Observer,' but have a good one tonight in honor of the occasion. There may be something here. Come home early at noon, and I'll help you get your paper ready."

"I'll be here, but if you want Frank, you'd better tell him not to dawdle over Annette's gate half an hour," began Jack, who could not resist teasing his dignified brother about one of the few foolish things he was fond of doing.

"Do you want your nose pulled?" demanded Frank, who never would stand joking on that tender point from his brother.

"No, I don't; and if I did, you couldn't do it;" with which taunt he was off and Frank after him, having made a futile dive at the impertinent little nose which was turned up at

him and his sweetheart.

"Boys, boys, not through the parlor!" implored Mamma, resigned to skirmishes, but trembling for her piano legs as the four stout boots pranced about the table and then went thundering down the hall, through the kitchen where the fat cook cheered them on, and Mary, the maid, tried to head off Frank as Jack rushed out into the garden. But the pursuer ducked under her arm and gave chase with all speed. Then there was a glorious race all over the place: for both were good runners, and, being as full of spring vigor as frisky calves, they did astonishing things in the way of leaping fences, dodging round corners, and making good time down the wide walks.

But Jack's leg was not quite strong yet, and he felt that his round nose was in danger of a vengeful tweak as his breath began to give out and Frank's long arms drew nearer and nearer to the threatened feature. Just when he was about to give up and meet his fate like a man, old Bunny, who had been much excited by the race, came scampering across the path with such a droll skip into the air and shake of the hind legs that Frank had to dodge to avoid stepping on him, and to laugh in spite of himself. This momentary check gave Jack a chance to bolt up the back stairs and take refuge in the Bird Room, from the window of which Jill had been watching the race with great interest.

No romping was allowed there, so a truce was made by locking little fingers, and both sat down to get their breath.

"I am to go on the piazza, for an hour, by and by, Doctor said. Would you mind carrying me down before you go to school, you do it so nicely, I'm not a bit afraid," said Jill, as eager for the little change as if it had been a long and varied journey.

"Yes, indeed! Come on, Princess," answered Jack, glad to see her so well and happy.

The boys made an arm-chair, and away she went, for a pleasant day downstairs. She thanked Frank with a posy for his buttonhole, well knowing that it would soon pass into other hands, and he departed to join Annette. Having told Jill about Bob, and set her to work on the "Observer," Jack kissed his mother, and went whistling down the street, a gay little bachelor, with a nod and smile for all he met, and no turned-up hat or jaunty turban bobbing along beside him to delay his steps or trouble his peace of mind.

At noon they worked on their paper, which was a collection of items, cut from other papers, concerning temperance, a few anecdotes, a bit of poetry, a story, and, if possible, an original article by the editor. Many hands make light work, and nothing remained but a little copying, which Jill promised to do before night. So the boys had time for a game of football after school in the afternoon, which they much enjoyed. As they sat resting on the posts, Gus said, -

"Uncle Fred says he will give us a hay-cart ride to-night, as it is moony, and after it you are all to come to our house and have games.

"Can't do it," answered Frank, sadly.

"Lodge," groaned Jack, for both considered a drive in the cart, where they all sat in a merry bunch among the hay, one of the joys of life, and much regretted that a prior engagement would prevent their sharing in it.

"That's a pity! I forgot it was Tuesday, and can't put it off, as I've asked all the rest. Give up your old Lodge and come along," said Gus, who had not joined yet.

"We might for once, perhaps, but I don't like to" - began Jack, hesitating.

"I won't. Who's to propose Bob if we don't? I want to go awfully; but I wouldn't disappoint Bob for a good deal, now he is willing to come." And Frank sprang off his post as if anxious to flee temptation, for it was very pleasant to go singing, up hill and down dale, in the spring moonlight, with - well, the fellows of his set.

"Nor Ed, I forgot that. No, we can't go. We want to be Good Templars, and we mustn't shirk," added Jack, following his brother.

"Better come. Can't put it off. Lots of fun," called Gus, disappointed at losing two of his favorite mates.

But the boys did not turn back, and as they went steadily away they felt that they were doing their little part in the good work, and making their small sacrifices, like faithful members.

They got their reward, however, for at home they found Mr. Chauncey, a good and great man, from England, who had known their grandfather, and was an honored friend of the family. The boys loved to hear him talk, and all tea-time listened with interest to the conversation, for Mr. Chauncey was a reformer as well as a famous clergyman, and it was like inspiring music to hear him tell about the world's work, and the brave men and women who were carrying it on. Eager to show that they had, at least, begun, the boys told him about their Lodge, and were immensely pleased when their guest took from his pocket-book a worn paper, proving that he too was a Good Templar, and belonged to the same army as they did. Nor was that all, for when they reluctantly excused themselves, Mr. Chauncey gave each a hearty "grip," and said, holding their hands in his, as he smiled at the young faces looking up at him with so much love and honor in them, -

"Tell the brothers and sisters that if I can serve them in any way while here, to command me. I will give them a lecture at their Lodge or in public, whichever they like; and I wish you God-speed, dear boys."

Two prouder lads never walked the streets than Frank and Jack as they hurried away, nearly forgetting the poor little paper in their haste to tell the good news; for it was seldom that such an offer was made the Lodge, and they felt the honor done them as bearers of it.

As the secrets of the association cannot be divulged to the uninitiated, we can only say that there was great rejoicing over the new member, for Bob was unanimously welcomed, and much gratitude both felt and expressed for Mr. Chauncey's interest in this small division of the grand army; for these good folk met with little sympathy from the great people of the town, and it was very cheering to have a well-known and much-beloved man say a word for them. All agreed that the lecture should be public, that others might share the pleasure with them, and perhaps be converted by a higher eloquence than any they possessed.

So the services that night were unusually full of spirit and good cheer; for all felt the influence of a friendly word, the beauty of a fine example. The paper was much applauded, the songs were very hearty, and when Frank, whose turn it was to be chaplain, read the closing prayer, every one felt that they had much to give thanks for, since one more had joined them, and the work was slowly getting on with unexpected helpers sent to lend a hand. The lights shone out from the little hall across the street, the music reached the ears of passers-by, and the busy hum of voices up there told how faithfully some, at least, of the villagers tried to make the town a safer place for their boys to grow up in, though the tavern still had its private bar and the saloon-door stood open to invite them in.

There are many such quiet lodges, and in them many young people learning as these lads were learning something of the duty they owed their neighbors as well as themselves, and being fitted to become good men and sober citizens by practising and preaching the law and gospel of temperance.

The next night Mr. Chauncey lectured, and the town turned out to hear the distinguished man, who not only told them of the crime and misery produced by this terrible

vice which afflicted both England and America, but of the great crusade against it going on everywhere, and the need of courage, patience, hard work, and much faith, that in time it might be overcome. Strong and cheerful words that all liked to hear and many heartily believed, especially the young Templars, whose boyish fancies were won by the idea of fighting as knights of old did in the famous crusades they read about in their splendid new young folks' edition of Froissart.

"We can't pitch into people as the Red Cross fellows did, but we can smash rum-jugs when we get the chance, and stand by our flag as our men did in the war," said Frank, with sparkling eyes, as they went home in the moonlight arm in arm, keeping step behind Mr. Chauncey, who led the way with their mother on his arm, a martial figure though a minister, and a good captain to follow, as the boys felt after hearing his stirring words.

"Let's try and get up a company of boys like those mother told us about, and show people that we mean what we say. I'll be color-bearer, and you may drill us as much as you like. A real Cold Water Army, with flags flying, and drums, and all sorts of larks," said Jack, much excited, and taking a dramatic view of the matter.

"We'll see about it. Something ought to be done, and perhaps we shall be the men to do it when the time comes," answered Frank, feeling ready to shoulder a musket or be a minute-man in good earnest.

Boyish talk and enthusiasm, but it was of the right sort; and when time and training had fitted them to bear arms, these young knights would be worthy to put on the red cross and ride away to help right the wrongs and slay the dragons that afflict the world.