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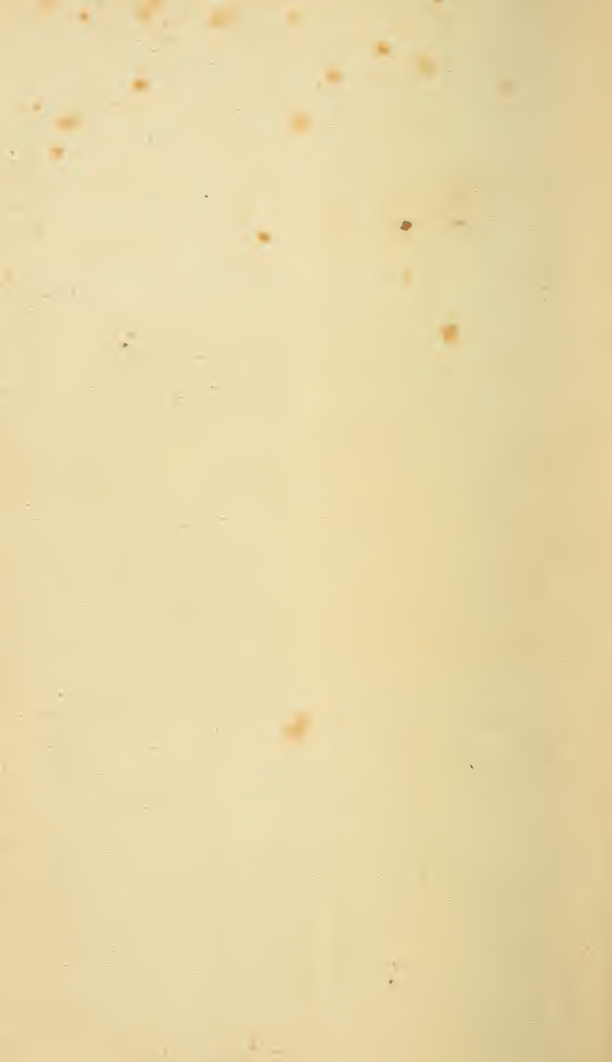
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1st March 1836.

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C. C. Sean. Prop.

I N T E M P E R A N C E .

Pearl Cyril

BY AN OBSERVER.

Recd at the Dept. of State

April 7th 1836.

Written for the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society,
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B O S T O N :

MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE scenes and sketches in this volume are all drawn from real life, and unadorned with imaginary drapery. They are believed to be true, to the letter. To those who would feel more interest in truth arrayed in the costume of fiction, and adorned with bright pictures of the imagination, the author would suggest the inquiry, whether, in an age abounding with artificial embellishment, such a thing may not sometimes occur, as Truth, "when unadorned, adorned the most." If the commonness of the occurrences should be thought a valid objection to their being written out for the public, it may still be urged that

some of the worst features of human nature are so exceedingly common, as almost to lose their power to arouse the conscience. Men will sometimes exhibit traits of character, habitually, which, if described in plain language, would astonish and perhaps alarm them; as children will often exhibit a countenance which frightens or mortifies them if they chance to behold it in a faithful mirror. It is also to be borne in mind that it is common errors, and frequent mischiefs, which most need a remedy. Those which are uncommon and startling, carry, to some extent, their remedy along with them. We need to guard with most vigilance against vice in those circumstances, where,

“Seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

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TALES OF INTEMPERANCE.

THE TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.....THE RELAPSED.

It was a severe winter's morning, near the commencement of the temperance reformation, in the "Valley of the Penobscot," when, in compliance with a previous invitation, I left the quiet Seminary for a ride of some twenty miles to give an address on temperance. The cold wind blew fiercely in my face, filling my eyes with dust, (for the ground was still uncovered,) and throwing off the cloak, which it was in vain to attempt confining to its proper place. A horse-back ride, in such circumstances, was a comfortless undertaking; but it was borne with tolerable courage, in the hope of doing something to arrest the cruel scourge which

had spread desolation through these young settlements, as well as in older sections of the land. On arriving at the place, it was gratifying to meet a hearty welcome from the gentleman who was interested in the enterprise, and had made arrangements for the meeting. He had been a merchant for many years, and had retailed many a hogshead of the "liquid fire," but his eyes had been opened, and he had banished the "*execrable stuff*" from his store, and now desired to undo the evils of his former course. With a few of his neighbors he had signed an instrument by which they engaged to abstain from the use of ardent spirits, and to unite in a temperance society when a suitable time might arrive for its formation. They expected some opposition, as there were two taverns and two or three stores, not far distant, where it was still kept ; and if they did not expect opposition from them, still it might be expected from those who obtained their supplies from these foun-

tains. But this evening must be the time for the organization of a society. It was a cold, cheerless evening, but curiosity drew out such as had no other motive,---curiosity to hear the first temperance lecture. The school-house was thronged, and the listening attention bespoke a candid audience, disposed to look at the matter seriously. The address closed with a request that all who were disposed to abandon the use of ardent spirits, and use their influence for the suppression of intemperance, would signify it by rising. More than half the congregation rose at once, and one and another, after looking around with astonishment, followed the example, till very few remained seated. It was then resolved to form a temperance society, and a constitution of the common form was adopted, and signed by a large majority of those present, and the constitution excluded wine as well as distilled liquor. The next morning it was gratifying to learn that the society numbered over one hundred

members ; that one of the merchants had signed the pledge, and was about abandoning the sale of spirits, and that the keepers of the taverns had mutually pledged themselves to banish the poison from their houses. Public sentiment had now taken hold of this work in a manner which gave strong hopes of its success. But there was one aged man who was the object of conversation and sympathy. The friends of temperance were disappointed in seeing him there, and still more disappointed in seeing him rise among the first to advocate the formation of a temperance society, and to witness the interest he seemed to feel in these movements. But no one had offered him the pledge. He had been so notoriously intemperate, they were afraid of him, and many thought he was the worse for liquor at the time. I knew but little of his history for more than a year after, save that he laid aside the use of spirits, and was thought by many a reformed man.

In the spring of 1832, while visiting that neighborhood, the following entry was made in my note book. " Mr. —, a man on whom I called on Tuesday, is probably a victim of intemperance. He has lived in this town for many years; his wife is a pious good mother, and they have an interesting family of children. His good native talents, and superior intelligence qualified him for usefulness, and secured for him a fair proportion of influence; but the passion for intoxicating liquor grew upon him, destroyed the confidence of the people, and brought sorrow upon his family. when the first temperance lecture was given in this town he attended, but in order to arm and equip himself for the occasion, he carried his jug to the store near the place of meeting, bought two quarts of liquor, drank a considerable quantity, and left his jug in the store. During the lecture he seemed quite agitated, and as they proceeded to form a society, he was quite forward in giving advice about its formation, al-

though it is probable he was then somewhat excited by the liquor he had taken. He would have joined the society if any one had given him opportunity, but they feared he would be an injury to the cause. He went back to the store and called for a measure, and poured the contents of his jug into it, apparently to see how much had been taken by him before attending the lecture. He sat looking at it for some time in a kind of reverie, and at length, seeming to gather resolution, he gave the measure a desperate kick, and emptied its contents on the floor, and then told the merchant to fill his jug with molasses, and never again put up spirits for him, let who would call for it. This direction has been complied with; for the merchant had that evening joined the temperance society, and forthwith abandoned the vile traffic. Mr. — went home with solemn resolutions, which he firmly adhered to for several months. Hope dawned on his family, and the neighbors thought him a reformed, happy man. But there came an

evil hour. He had visiters from New Hampshire, and unfortunately they belonged to the "dry list." They could ridicule temperance societies, and they rallied him on his cold water notions, till he went and bought some of the drunkard's quietus, and drank with them, and has since been confirmed in his former habits. It is the opinion of some who best know him, that if he had signed the pledge, he would have lived accordingly, and that all the efforts of his visiters would not have been able to move him. Now there is reason to fear he is a ruined man. There is still, however, some hope; his mind is occasionally impressed with religious truth, and would he but abandon his cups, there would be strong grounds of hope. Will not those who have influence with him, labor for this result, and pray that the grace of God will pluck him as a brand from the burning, and make him a new creature in Christ?"

THE RECLAIMED.

“ He was lost — and is found. ”

It was late on Saturday evening, when, fatigued and almost covered with mud, I dismounted at the door of a neat white cottage, situated on the brow of the hill, a little way from the business part of the village of ——. In answer to a call for missionary labor, from an inmate of this dwelling, I had engaged to preach in that village on the next day, and had traveled many a weary mile out of the usual route, because a sudden freshet had swept away bridges, and made it difficult to pass the swollen streams which crossed the road. This occasioned the lateness of the hour, and made a cheerful fire and quiet rest more grateful than usual. The next day, notwithstanding the badness of the roads, a considerable number assembled at the school-house, (there was no meeting-house in the village) and made

up an interesting and attentive audience.

There was one aged man whose appearance could hardly fail to attract notice. His gray locks, and squalid countenance bespoke an aged votary to intemperance. On returning from meeting, the inquiry was, "What has started old Mr. S. out to meeting?" By inquiring, I found that he had long neglected the means of grace, and professed to disbelieve the Bible. He had long been intemperate, profane and unhappy in his family. His wife, who had also neglected meetings for years, either to gratify him, or because of their poverty, or for want of interest, had several times been on the point of leaving him, because of his treatment. Their children had grown up, and for the most part lived away from them. Recently there had been some excitement on the subject of religion in the village, and the wife had become interested in meetings and in a Savior, and had prevailed on her husband to attend

meeting that Sabbath. A lecture was appointed for the evening at the house of my friend, and the old man was there with his wife, and listened with fixed attention, and an earnestness which indicated feeling. Such was the appearance of the audience, that I could not dismiss the meeting without inviting such as wished for personal conversation on the subject of religion to remain for that purpose. Several remained, and this man and his wife among the rest. Some were professors of religion of different denominations, some had recently felt the joys of forgiveness, and others were more or less anxious. One remained to cavil and to embarrass the minds of Christians, or win them to his faith. He had been a member of a church but had forsaken her communion, and was now about to commence preaching Universal Salvation. Without noticing his conversation with professors of religion, who knew his life too well to be influenced by his arguments, I sought opportunity to converse

with those who remained for a different purpose, and especially with this aged man. His wife manifested the tenderness of one lately born of the Spirit, and an earnest desire for the conversion of her husband. After conversing with several others, I approached him as he sat alone upon the temporary seat fitted up for the evening. Taking a seat by his side, I asked him if he had satisfactory evidence of being a Christian. He said he had not. "You believe in religion, I suppose, and in its importance."

"I did not, till within a few days; at least, I tried to believe that religion was all a delusion. But I don't think so now. I believe my wife has become a Christian, and if this is religion, I know it is a good thing."

"Well, why should you not try its realities for yourself? Do you find yourself happy enough and good enough without it?"

"O no, I am far enough from being happy, and have been for a great many

years. But I never expect to be happy : I am an old man, and my time for happiness has gone by."

"But the religion of Christ has made older people than you are exceedingly happy, and why not you, as well as others?"

"If I had attended to it while young, I might have found peace ; but now it is too late : I have grieved the Holy Spirit, and now I cannot expect forgiveness."

"But are you sure the Holy Spirit has left you for ever? What then makes you feel as you now do? Is not this kind Messenger now striving with you?"

"Why, I don't know, as to that ; but I never expect to be a Christian : there are too many things in the way."

"Is there any thing which the grace of God cannot enable you to overcome? Have you any sin which God cannot forgive? Any from which the blood of Christ cannot cleanse you?"

"I must tell you that I have been a

man that dranked a great deal, and that has made me quarrelsome and unkind to my family and neighbors. And then I used to swear, and take God's name in vain. I have scoffed at religion, ridiculed Christians, and denied the Bible."

"Well, that is a bad way to live, it is true; and no wonder you have found that 'the way of transgressors is hard.' But we are assured that 'Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy.' And can you not go and confess your sins to God as well as to me? And can you not forsake them too?"

"I don't know; I have broken so many resolutions, I am afraid to trust them. I can do nothing myself; I am a poor, helpless, miserable creature."

"Well, then, why not go at once, and ask God to help you. If you were drowning in that river, and could not help yourself, and you knew that you must die without help, you would cry for help *at once, and in earnest*. If even

your worst enemy stood on the shore, you would beg of him to help you. But how much more willing is God to help you than your neighbor is. He is more willing to give his Holy Spirit to those who ask him, than earthly parents are to give good things to their children. Now, bad as you say you have been, when your children were dependent upon you, and came to you to ask for bread, would you refuse them?"

"No, I could not do that."

"Well, do you think they were more needy than you are? or that you were more ready to help them than God is to help you?"

"But then I am ashamed to ask him; I have no heart to pray; and I am afraid to try: I am afraid I should only mock God."

"But, if you are willing to confess and forsake your sins, and really desire forgiveness, and go to God with the language of the publican,—'God be merciful to me a sinner,' do you think

God will be angry with you for it, and reproach you for mockery? If you will not forsake sin, and do not desire forgiveness, it would be mockery to pray for it. But do you not feel the need of forgiveness? Does not your past life seem odious; and do you not desire to live differently?"

"I should, if I thought it would be of any use."

"You may rest assured it will be of use, to cast yourself on the mercy of God. Did you ever know a man who went to Christ for help, and was sent away unblessed? At any rate, it is safe to make the trial, and it is not safe to delay it. You have tried neglecting religion a long time; and will you not now try seeking it by forsaking every sin, and asking forgiveness for the past, and assistance for the future?"

"I feel as if I must do something: I cannot live so. But I don't know how it will turn with me. I hope Christians will pray for me, if they can. My wife prays for me: that's one comfort."

The disclosures of his mind this evening could not fail to enlist a deeper interest in the little circle of Christians, and call forth more direct and fervent prayers in his behalf.

On the following evening, he was again present at a lecture in the same place, and the tears were seen rolling down his cheeks during the sermon. The audience dispersed silently, and a professor of religion, fearing what might be the effect of the preaching of another denomination, and knowing that the old gentleman had something on his mind, endeavored to persuade him that the sermon was too personal. In illustrating the various ways in which the Holy Spirit may be grieved, the substance of the following remarks had been made :

“ Another way in which the Holy Spirit may be grieved, is by the use of intoxicating liquors. When the mind is pressed with a sense of guilt, and the force of truth, and the operation of the Spirit of God, there is a strange

propensity to remove this pressure in the wrong way ; and no way is perhaps more sure or deadly than this. Let a man, in this anxious state of mind, resort to his bottle, and indulge but moderately, and he is almost certain to destroy his seriousness, or he is in danger of mistaking his true character, and cherishing a spurious hope, which will disgrace religion, and perish, as the hope of the hypocrite, when God takes away the soul. Let every man who desires salvation, then, avoid the intoxicating cup, as he would the enemy of his soul. If there be a propensity to this habit, the danger is great, and let every one who feels at all inclined to the daily use of this poison, fix it in his mind, as a settled point, that he must totally abandon the use of ardent spirit, or the Holy Spirit will abandon him."

Such preaching the cautious professor thought altogether too personal, and expressed this opinion to the anxious man. But he thought differently. His reply was, "Not at all—not a whit too

close. All he said about drinking rum, I took to myself, and I hope it will do me good. It's all true, every word of it: I know by experience. I was glad to hear him preach so plain. I like the truth, if it does cut: I need it. It's no use to mince the matter, and cover up things: such preaching will never do any good: it only serves to make hypocrites."

The day following, he declared it his solemn determination never to drink ardent spirits again. In the course of the day, his resolution was put to a test. Liquor was used by those at work with him, and with whom he used to drink; but he refused to taste it. They ridiculed and insulted him, and tried to quarrel with him, but all to no purpose. His reply was, "I shall neither drink, nor swear, nor quarrel with you. And *you* had better leave it off: it does you no good, nor your families. I think we have, all of us, done enough at it."

On Wednesday evening, having re-

turned from a neighboring town, I preached again in a private house. By this time, the old gentleman had resolved and publicly declared his resolution never to swear any more. A deep and solemn interest was manifest in his countenance, but still he thought he could never be a Christian.

The next day was the annual "Thanksgiving." This man having procured a new hat, and otherwise improved his appearance, was at meeting, and an attentive hearer; but no comfort was in his soul.

On Saturday evening, having returned from another excursion, another lecture was preached, and it was affecting to see his aged form bowed down, and the tears streaming from his eyes; and yet to find him unconvinced that there could be mercy for such an one. But he seemed less positive that his case was hopeless than before; and it was difficult for those who knew his state of feeling, to resist the conviction that a good work had commenced, which

would be carried forward to the day of Jesus Christ.

The next day, I had occasion to preach in an adjoining town. This man walked all the distance, and the most intense anxiety was manifest all day in his countenance. As the audience dispersed, he came and took me by the hand, and burst into a flood of tears. Sobs almost choked his utterance, as the agonizing inquiry, "What shall I do?" trembled on his tongue. It was a scene to soften the hardest heart. He seemed overwhelmed with a sense of sin, and felt as if there was no escape. I still endeavored to convince him that there was, and pointed him again to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, and urged him, as I had repeatedly done before, to believe on him to the saving of the soul.

It was painful to part with him; but it was not without strong hope that he would soon know the joys of salvation. It was the last time I saw him, as I left

the region immediately ; but it was not long after that I received intelligence that he was a happy man. Several months afterwards, I received a letter from the family in the little white cottage, communicating the following facts :

* * * * "Mr. and Mrs. S. inquire after you, and wish an affectionate remembrance. They, with several others with whom you became acquainted, have united with the little church in —, and we trust the time is not far distant when a church will be formed in this village. Soon after you left, Mr. S. came out decidedly on the Lord's side, commenced family prayer, joined the temperance society, and now that is a happy family, and he is esteemed a worthy and devoted member of the church of Christ. The change in him is so great, that the most skeptical know not what to say of it. It is truly the Lord's doings, and it is marvelous in our eyes. Yours affectionately,
— —."

It is only necessary to add, here,—
“Let him that thinketh he standeth,
take heed lest he fall.” There is rum
still sold in that village, and there are
old associates who drink it. Should
this man indulge once in the intoxicat-
ing glass, he will, in all probability,
cease to be among the reclaimed, and
stand on the catalogue of the ruined.

THE WOUNDED.

“He means me.”

It was yet dark for a starlight morn-
ing, when the shrill notes of the stage-
driver’s horn, under my window, broke
the spell of a delightful dream, and
roused me to a scene of momentary
horror. Bright fires were gleaming in
every part of the village, overlooked by
my window, and the fire bells had just
commenced a fearful clamor. The first
supposition was that the work of the

incendiary had been completed, and that the village was all on fire, and in every part of our three story building, might be heard the bustle of fellow students, preparing in haste to meet the sad crisis. But as soon as we were sufficiently awake to remember that it was the "*fourth of July*," our alarm gave place to vexation, that we should be thus frightened and disturbed by the frolic of boys, (many of them indeed grown up) who were so full of independence, that they must give vent to it before daylight, by kindling bonfires, and ringing fire bells, and thus playing a game which must give a momentary fright, even to those who best understood it.

The stage-man's horn blew another blast, and I was soon with him, on my way to a quiet village, more than twenty miles distant, to unite in celebrating Independence—not with guns and squibs and revelry—but in a quiet temperance meeting. Daylight soon dawned, as the noise of the village we

had left, died away in the distance, and a most splendid sunrise painted a beautiful landscape on either hand, where the forest had given place to cultivated farms. The dew was yet glittering in every direction, and the haymakers on several farms were just commencing their labors for the first day of haying, when we stopped at the public house near the place where the temperance society was to hold its anniversary. Busy thoughts would of course come in as to the results of the day. Would these farmers leave their haymaking, after dinner, to attend a temperance address? If so, how would they receive it from a pale-faced student? Who, among these, is on the side of temperance? And who will this day take a stand? How will the owners of these stores and this public house treat the subject? I had learned but few facts from the secretary of the society, in the short interview which led to my engagement to give the address at their first annual meeting; but I was a stranger to the citizens. The interval, till noon,

was spent in forming some acquaintance with the state of affairs, and arranging topics for the address. It was a small village ; but, being situated where two roads crossed at right angles, it was a convenient centre of business for three or four towns ; and it was ascertained that more than twenty hogsheads of rum had been sold in a year at the stores, although the country was new, and the population scattering. A small temperance society had been formed, but had excited no great interest among the more wealthy and influential families. Still the current of feeling was turning in favor of temperance habits, and the sale of spirit, at the stores, had essentially diminished. The gentlemanly deportment of the citizens, and readiness to answer inquiries, and to converse on the subject, inspired the hope of a favorable issue to our meeting ; and yet, as the hour approached, there was a kind of shrinking at the heart, altogether unusual, and which I knew not well how to grapple with.

The dinner hour was past, and the people were flocking to the barn (there was no meeting-house, and the school-house would not hold the audience), when, who should drive up but "Father S——, the Missionary," in his old wag-on. Nothing could afford greater relief at this moment, for he was a thorough temperance man, and his venerable appearance, his white locks, and his firm nerves at the age of seventy-two, would preach temperance successfully; and besides his tongue was the pen of a ready writer, and never talked nonsense. Soon we were all assembled, and Father S. went up the ladder with me, and sat upon the staging by my side, prepared to follow up the address with appropriate remarks. It was an interesting assembly. The large barn floor, and "tie up," had been fitted with temporary seats, but these had all been filled, and blocks and boards had been conveyed to the scaffold, and these, the "side galleries," were now full. Curiosity had drawn together a mixed

assembly, and the poor and the rich, the shabby and the well dressed, were intermingled, and seated in listening attitudes, for about half an hour during the address, when an incident occurred which unsettled the gravity of the audience. Several views of intemperance had been listened to with fixed attention, when "the pleasures of drinking" came up in the following language:

"We often hear of the pleasures of drinking, and many pursue it as if it were the chief good. You hear men talk of the social glass, the smiling bottle, of drinking to drive away dull care. You even hear them tell of being most gloriously drunk, and on this anniversary, men often show their estimation of liberty and independence by drinking to excess. But what and where is the pleasure of drinking? Is it in the fitful and transient excitement of the first half glass? But this only creates a thirst for more, and makes the votary restless and uneasy till he drinks again. Is it in that strange ex-

citement that makes a man silly, and causes his tongue to prate loud nonsense, and his eye to wander in the style of an idiot? Is it when he staggers in the streets, or steals away to conceal himself in hay-lofts, or behind sheds or stone-walls to escape the notice of men and the tricks of boys? Is it when he can do neither of these, but yielding to the laws of gravity, wallows in dust and filth, as he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, curses his God, and his wife and children? Or is it when awaking from his last night's debauch, when his quivering hand and parched lip, and blood-shot eye, and raging thirst tell the story of his shame? Is it when conscience rouses up to assert her insulted and abused supremacy, and accuses him of squandering his property, destroying his character, beggaring his children, clothing them with rags, depriving them of the key of knowledge, covering them with shame and fear, and sending them crying and supperless to bed? Is it in seeing the

tears of wo and anguish trickle down the furrowed cheeks of his wife, cheeks not furrowed with age? Is it in breaking her heart—not with a sudden, crushing blow, but snapping it fibre after fibre, although he swore to cherish her till death? Is it in murdering his own soul, and rushing—”

Just at this point a large, fat, red-faced man sprung up in the midst of the assembly, and shrieked out in an unearthly tone, “*He means me—HE MEANS ME—He’s spittin out all his spite at me—let me get out—let me get out—I won’t stay here to be insulted at this rate,*” and away he staggered, almost tumbling prostrate over the seats and over those who occupied them. He left the barn apparently in great rage, and went off to the stores, cursing and swearing in unmeasured terms. The effect upon the audience was tremendous. At first, a sudden burst of laughter rung through the assembly ; but in a moment all was still, and the attention to the close of the address more fixed and serious. Then

Father S. rose, and cast his eye leisurely upon the audience, and began as follows :

“ I have been a young man, and now am old. I have seen more than three score and ten years, and have been exposed to the heat of summer and cold of winter, and to all the vicissitudes of life. My hand does not tremble.” He then stretched out his right hand, and exhibited a firmness of nerve which few young men could command under such circumstances. He then went on to say, that his eye was not dim, nor his natural strength abated, as was common with men of his years, and that, under God—for he assured us that every blessing was the gift of God—that under God, he owed his good health and ability to labor in the ministry, to the habits of temperance which he adopted when a young man. He had seen the bad effects of spirituous liquors in the army, in the time of the revolutionary war, and formed the resolution to abandon its use, and with the help of God

he had been able to abide by his resolution. He gave a fatherly exhortation to the old and the young to enlist in the cause of temperance, and to sign the pledge then—it was a declaration of independence of greater moment than that signed by our forefathers more than half a century ago. After he sat down, the presiding officer of the society requested those who were not members to become such, and it was a delightful sight to see the fathers of the town with their wives and children, come forward and sign the temperance pledge. One of the friends of the cause remarked, “Well, you have nailed the colors of the temperance society to the mast, and old Mr. —, when he staggered out, hit the nail on the head, and father S. has clenched it.”

Before another celebration of Independence the large public house was purged of its destructive elements, and the inebriate could find no place to quench his thirst for rum, in all the neighborhood.

Since that period, a blessed revival of religion has been enjoyed in that village, and now a new and beautiful meeting-house points its spire to heaven, and a letter lying before me, contains an invitation to attend its dedication, and the installation of a gospel minister.

THE TEMPERANCE MEETINGS.

IN the winter of 183—, while giving lectures in a quiet village, an urgent request was made by a recently married niece of the clergyman, for a temperance lecture in the plantation* where she had now taken up her abode. Her husband although doubtful of the result of such an affair, rather seconded the request, and proposed that the meeting should be at his father's house,

* A plantation is a township, in its early settlement, before being incorporated as a town.

the only convenient one for such purposes in the neighborhood. No address had ever been given there, and temperance papers had not yet found their way to the families. All that was known of temperance societies, save by a very few individuals, was the vague rumors which ignorance, opposition, and jealousy were wont to circulate in the early history of the reformation. The day at length arrived ; but a snow had fallen, and became encrusted so as to make a twelve mile walk rather formidable. A disappointment, however, provided any should assemble, could not be thought of, and the journey was performed just in time to call upon one of the family beside the one above named. That was the family of Elder ——, who had formerly officiated as the minister of a little church in the plantation, but was then in feeble health, and laid aside from his labors, by a disease that in a few months carried him to the grave. He could therefore, with propriety excuse himself from attending

the meeting, and it was easy to discover that he was fearful about the result of it. The old gentleman whose son had offered the house for the lecture was absent ; but the family gave a welcome reception to the unexpected lecturer. They had supposed the traveling too bad for the people, scattered as they were, to assemble, and did not imagine that any one would walk twelve miles at such a time to address them. But before the supper table was removed, persons began to come in and cluster round the fire, casting significant looks at the stranger and at each other, and whispering among themselves amusing things about temperance societies. More than twenty young persons assembled, but all were confident that they should not be caught in the "temperance trap." They supposed that temperance lecturers had "twenty-five cents a head" for all the signatures they obtained, and were quite sure that he had come to the wrong place to speculate in this line. However they were disposed to hear what might be said,

and the result was quite different from what was anticipated. The temperance pledge, when read and explained, did not seem quite so bad as was supposed, and when it was submitted to them, the question went round,—

“ You going to sign it ? ”

“ What say ? ”

“ I’ll sign it if you will. ”

“ Well, it’s a bargain. ”

The ice was broken ; one after another followed the example, till every name was fixed to the pledge. Then the story was, “ O how I wish father was here, ” and “ how I wish Mr. A., and Uncle B., and cousin C., and Wm. D. could hear a lecture. ”

“ Can’t you come again ? ”

“ Why won’t you, now ? ”

“ If you’ll come over week after next, we’ll have a house full then, all the folks’ll come in. They didn’t think you’d be here to-night. ”

Another appointment was made, and the time soon arrived. The day was pleasant. Mounting a spirited horse,

after dinner, I was at the settlement some time before evening, and called again upon Elder ——, to inquire for his health, and converse further upon the objects of my visit. But here a new scene opened. Two aged men were present, one of them in close and earnest conversation with Elder ——, and on my entering by direction of Mrs. ——, all seemed taken by surprise. After being introduced to “brother J.” and “brother K.,” I was soon acquainted with the fact that the object of the meeting was to devise ways and means to put a stop to the encroachments of temperance societies, upon the rights and liberties of the people. The principal mover in this transaction, was an aged man, of short stature, glossy red face, and his few remaining locks “blossomed for the grave.” It was affecting to see a leader in the church, laboring with his sick minister to procure his sanction to the opposition he was waging against the embryo temperance reform, of the little settlements. But he

was too much excited, and his breath gave *too strong* evidence of the secret of his opposition to temperance societies, to carry his minister or his other brother in the church, fully into his measures, or to reason the case deliberately. He was for “presarving the liberties of the country.” “Temperance societies were bringing the country into lordships, and it was time to be up and doing.” He was willing “to defend the liberties of his country at the point of the bagonet.” He had a “rusty firelock that did good execution in the revolution, and he was ready to shoulder it at a moment’s warning, and would fight till he died before he would submit to such tyranny.” Such were the spirit and language of this *professed disciple* of the PRINCE OF PEACE. The most frightful stories of temperance societies were then detailed by him, as if he believed them to be living realities. It was difficult to reason with him ; but a cool description of the temperance principles and measures, and a careful

examination of the pledge, convinced his associates that there was nothing very dangerous in abandoning the use of poison as a drink, or in signing a paper to that effect. His associate brother in the church, became interested to hear more, and invited me to his house. It was the house where the former lecture was given ; but this man was absent, and being unacquainted with the character of temperance societies, he had been drawn into his present position by the representations of the zealous "*defender of liberty.*" Before the time for the evening address, I was able to learn the history of the opposition. When the young people returned from the previous lecture, and reported themselves as members of a temperance society, there was a great stir among the people. They were taken by surprise, that those turning the world upside down should come hither, and find converts to the temperance cause. But among all the excited ones there was no one to go forward to

stop the progress of the cause with so much zeal as old Mr. K. He had some able assistants, but his long standing in the church gave him a kind of authority and boldness, which distinguished him as the leader. The interval had been a busy one, and the plans were all laid. Several persons were engaged to address the meeting in reply to me, if there was liberty, and if not, to take liberty. To effect the thing more successfully, it was proposed to have the lecture in an old shell of a building which had been occupied as a school-house. There, as no one would be under the obligation "to rule his own house," it was thought the whole affair could be disposed of successfully. One who was reported as a speaker for the evening, was a "Squire" ——, who kept a grocery or *grogger*y in the corner of a neighboring town. Another part of the plan was, to have the names given at the former meeting withdrawn from the pledge, and thus bring matters back to their former course. Such representa-

tions had been made to them, in the mean time, that most of them had engaged to withdraw their names. Such a state of feeling was rather discouraging for the evening's exercise. The hour soon arrived, and brought with it all the settlers within a considerable distance who could leave their homes. There was a promiscuous company crowded into two unfinished rooms of the dwelling-house, which the owner had opened with much cheerfulness, the efforts of Mr. K. notwithstanding. For a time, appearances were rather ominous of confusion and personal insult; but when the time for commencing the address arrived, a few words of conciliatory introduction produced the desired effect of quieting all apprehension, and inducing the audience to listen attentively to what was urged in behalf of temperance for an hour and a quarter. They were assured, in the outset, that a fair chance of being heard in reply to the address, should be given them, and a general invitation

extended to express their views freely. As many of those opposed to the pledge professed to be "*friends of temperance,*" but did not like this "*being bound,*" it was necessary to meet this view somewhat fully. The popular feeling seemed to be much engrossed with the idea of an infringement of their rights and liberties, and after spreading out the evils of intemperance, this idea was dwelt upon in the following language.

"But you all perhaps agree that intemperance is a tremendous evil, scattering disease, and poverty, and crime, and wo, and death, all over our country, still you do not all agree as to the remedy. You know that if every man, woman and child would abandon the use of spirits, the evils of intemperance would cease; still you may not like the plan of signing a pledge of total abstinence. But what objection? You "*don't like to be bound.*" But why not act on the same principle in other matters? You owe a man five dollars; you acknowledge the debt, and you intend to pay it honestly.

But your creditor expects your note. 'Oh no, I don't like this being bound. I like honesty as well as any man. I despise the man that won't pay his debts ; but this is a free country, and I've no idea of being brought into bondage by signing that paper.'

"Will such an argument sound well in your common business transactions ?

"But it is a perversion of language to talk of signing the pledge as "being brought into bondage." Just the reverse of this is the truth. A temperance pledge is, to all intents and purpose, a "DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE." It is but saying, in other words, that we have been long enough in bondage, and asserting our freedom. We have submitted to the bondage of fashion and appetite, and paid our portion of the monstrous tax, which has been imposed on society by the use of distilled liquor long enough. Who does not know that intemperance has imposed a heavier tax on this nation, than all the fleets and armies of Europe could have imposed

upon us, even in the days of our infancy. The taxes which the British levied upon our forefathers, and the injuries which caused the declaration of independence to be put forth and maintained, were nothing in comparison with the tax we have paid, year after year, for the "*raw material*," which has converted our country into beggars, liars, gamblers, sots, robbers and murderers, filled the land with widows and orphans, and wailings of despair; filled our poor-houses, our prisons and our grave-yards, and trained up candidates for the gallows. And yet we honor our fathers for signing that instrument, and for resisting the oppressions they felt. Why not, instead of revering them as the authors of our freedom, turn round and ridicule them for "*coming into bondage*," by signing that pledge. Suppose, when the Declaration of Independence was written out, and submitted to that band of heroes whose names are upon it, they had reasoned in this way. Suppose John Hancock had stood up in that meeting, and said,

‘Gentlemen, I am no friend to British taxation; I abhor oppression and tyranny as much as any man. I am determined to be free, and use all my influence to free our country; but I don’t mean to sign that Declaration. I can avoid paying taxes to the king without it as well as with, and I don’t like being bound. I don’t see any use in signing my name to it; and it looks to me as if there was some mischief concealed under it. It smells of priestcraft, and it looks to me as if it was a design to unite church and state, and it’s altogether a sectarian thing.’ Now what would you say of John Hancock, if he had talked in this way? What would posterity say of him? Instead of enrolling his name on the records of fame, you would write it on the black list close to that of Benedict Arnold. And what if all who signed that Declaration had talked and acted in such a manner? Where would have been the rallying point? Where would have been our liberty and our independence? But they were not the men to

shrink and abandon the cause of freedom at such a crisis. They wrote out their names in defence of principles which were dearer to them than life, and thus pledged their lives, and fortunes, and their sacred honor, for the safety and happiness of the country. And for this we almost worship them. And now that oppressions more grievous have settled down upon us, and threaten us with ruin, and the voice of suffering humanity calls upon us for relief, shall we refuse to act? When this new declaration of independence is spread out before us, shall we start back and refuse to sign it? How then will posterity look back upon our course? When the tide of intemperance has been rolled back, and its foul stains have been washed away, and its fiery channels have been quenched in pure water, and its tremendous curses live only in story, with what interest will our children's children examine the records of the temperance societies which have wrought this mighty deliverance. How eagerly

will they look for the names of their ancestors. 'There,' says one, 'is the name of my great grandfather,' 'and there,' says another, 'was my grandfather. He was a little boy then, and could hardly write his name, but he had the soul of a man, and he always lived up to the pledge.' But who can paint the feelings of mortification and disappointment of that child who looks over the record IN VAIN, *for the name of his grandfather or any of his ancestors?* Who would subject his children's children to a mortification like this? Or worse, perhaps. Let us suppose that those now upon the stage of action, who refuse to coöperate with these societies, should be successful in throwing obstacles in the way. Suppose they drink just enough to make the use of liquor respectable, and thus transmit the intemperance, which always follows in the train of moderate drinking, to future generations. Then, when opening their eyes upon the wide spread ruin, our children's children will know

that early in the 19th century, when the friends of humanity arose to quench the fires of intemperance, *their* ancestors prevented them, and rekindled its dying embers to burn on fiercer, and blast the hopes of the world. Shall we ever be reproached with such treason to our country or injustice to our offspring? The alternative is before you, and must be decided soon. What we do, in a cause like this, should be done deliberately, but must be done quickly. And, in conclusion, I have one request to make, and that is, that every man, woman and child, who is willing to abandon the use of intoxicating liquors as a drink, and to use a decided influence in favor of temperance, to manifest it by rising up."

This movement was so sudden and unexpected, that all were taken by surprise; and all seemed astonished to find themselves and all around them standing up, as it were, by a simultaneous rush, apparently on the side of temperance principles. Hardly an individual

was left upon the seats, and yet some had no idea of abandoning the use of liquor, and others were as much bent on opposing the society as before. Still this sudden movement of the whole body was exceedingly embarrassing to those who were about to make speeches. It was with some difficulty that any one could muster resolution enough to speak. Old Mr. K., however, was soon sufficiently nerved up to let off his speech; but it was one which had been made up beforehand, and had been substantially given out during the conversation in the afternoon; and the few ideas it contained, had been so entirely anticipated, that he seemed himself more ashamed of what he had said, than any one else was moved by it.

Next rose a young man who had signed the paper at the previous meeting, and who had formerly been intemperate. He wished to have his name taken from the paper. He liked the society, but wanted his name taken off because the neighbors laughed at him, and

told him he couldn't keep from getting drunk without signing the pledge. He wished to let them know he could be sober without joining a society.

Then a man of middle age, on whom much dependence had been placed, stood up and leaned back against the partition (for he was too much under the influence of strong drink to stand easily without this support) and began to pour forth reproaches and ridicule upon Christianity, and Sabbath Schools, and Bible Societies, and denounced them as a speculating business to help the rich into power, and deprive the poor man of his rights. He seemed to forget that the subject of temperance was the one in order, and after venting his bitterness in a manner to shame those who had urged him forward, he sat down.

After him, another, with a very honest face, and with his whole soul agitated with some mighty forebodings, began to speak. Drawing up very close, he began as follows :

“ Now, mister, I am no friend to rum, and I like what there is on that paper. I wish there wan't a drop of rum in America—I'd hold up both hands for it. But then don't you know this ere thing is bringing the country all into lordships ? I like what you read on that constitution ; but they don't put it all in there. They jest put that in to start with ; and then spose we all sign that, and say we won't drink any more gin or rum or brandy. Well, then the next thing, we mustn't have no tobacker, and mustn't smoke, and then mustn't have no tea nor coffee. Then we must give up most all our vittles. Don't you know they've got a society now in B—— that they mustn't have only one kind of vittles ? and there's a committee to sarch the houses, and if they find more than one sort, the constable goes and takes it away. And you see its bringin the country all into lordships, so pretty soon we shall have a king ; and then when I kill an ox or a pig, I must give a quarter on't to the king ; and if I raise

ten bushel of potatoes, I must give one bushel to the king, to support the lazy priests. Why, don't you know they tried to git a king in Boston some time ago, and 'the working-men' wouldn't let 'em do so. Now what is our country coming to?"

Such was the zeal and apparent sincerity of this man, that it was difficult to command sufficient gravity to reply to his imploring speech. But as he waited for an answer, I replied with as much composure as possible, assuring him that I had lived in B—— for some years, and that no such society as he described existed; that somebody had deceived him, and that there was no prospect of a king through the agency of temperance societies. Men of temperate habits were better prepared to govern themselves than drunkards, and would be more likely to have that knowledge and virtue which are the strength of republican institutions. As to the pledge, when you sign that, you agree to do just what that requires, and

nothing more. Just as, when you sign a note, to pay ten dollars and interest, you are obliged to do what the note says, and only that.

“ Well, now, that stands to reason. But Mr. — said it was just as I told you, and that he read it in the newspaper. Now I don't take papers, myself, for I can't read much ; but then I thought 'twas all true. Now I'm glad I found out, and I think I shall join that paper.”

No other one seemed disposed to speak, and, as the evening was far spent, it was time to try the final issue. It was with some anxiety that I then requested all who wished their names withdrawn from the pledge, to manifest it. Old Mr. K—— said, “ I've one son whose name must be took off, for he's not of age ; and if his name isn't took off, *I'll* prosecute—prosecute”—but he could not finish the sentence, for he knew not who or what to prosecute. Another father ordered the names of his two children erased, as they were neither of them of age.

These, with the young man referred to above, reduced the society by four, and now was the time for volunteers. One after another came forward to sign the pledge, till the society numbered near fifty, and then the officers were chosen, and the temperance society established on a firm foundation, with the very man whom Mr. K—— had drawn into the measure of opposition, as described above, unanimously elected as its president.

But the opposition did not rest here. Not long afterwards, a young man who was studying law in a town not many miles distant, and another "Esquire" ——, who kept a grocery, favored them with a visit, and spent a Sabbath. One half of the day was occupied with lectures against temperance societies, and in forming what was familiarly called an anti-temperance society; and the other half was spent in lecturing against the divine authority of the Sabbath, and in favor of Sabbath mails. But the principles of the temperance society

have steadily advanced, and are preparing the way for other good works.

THE TRUANT BOY.

THE school-house where two of my winters were spent, in the routine of labors which the schoolmaster can better understand than describe, was situated on the sunny side of a beautiful forest, by which it was concealed from the little village that furnished most of my scholars. In that village was a smoky looking building, where the surplus rye of the surrounding country was converted into American gin ; and the slumbering conscience of the nation had not then fixed the seal of reprobation upon it. The business

of distilling was then reputable. Many of the inhabitants of the village were interested in it: some worked the distillery; others made the casks; others, again, carried the gin to market, and procured the raw materials; and others sold "groceries" to the laborers. The village school had acquired a reputation rather undesirable, as teachers had occasionally been dismissed, because they differed from the scholars or parents on the propriety of discipline, or the mode of its administration in the school. An affair of this nature, the winter previous, created more anxiety for the result of the first efforts. Some apparently formidable cases of discipline, however, were soon disposed of in a way to give permanency to measures adopted in the school, and to promise a pleasant winter. But there were some cases of a trying character. One little fellow, six or seven years of age, I can never forget. His complexion was pale, his expression downcast and sorrowful, and it was apparently impossible to awaken any de-

sire to learn, or to be respected by his fellows. He was not wanting in intellect, but in application. He was at school nearly every day, but always late ; for he played truant. It was some time before he was fairly detected in this, for he always had a plausible excuse for being late. Poor boy, his difficulty in part could be understood : he had an *intemperate mother*. His father, who was almost incessantly engaged in the distillery, and heavy hearted, in view of his domestic calamity, could know but little of the obliquity of his favorite boy, and could bear still less to correct his wanderings. Indeed, he could not believe his son seriously wrong, for he was a goodnatured, affectionate child, when indulged with the society of his father ; and, the winter previous, when the little fellow had been detected in stealing from the teacher's table, and was to receive punishment on the following day, the misjudging father sent a message forbidding the teacher to punish him. The

message was effectual in screening the lad, and, with other similar matters, successful in breaking up the school. Still these circumstances did not destroy the hope of inspiring the boy with spirit, and persuading him to look up in my face like other boys. But efforts were unsuccessful. He studied only by compulsion, was always the dullest scholar in his class, and was still late at school, and would look no one in the face. Perhaps the suspicions of the other scholars rested upon him, and led them to treat him with contempt or unkindness ; but I watched for evidence of it in vain, and labored in vain for the welfare of the child, till the occurrence which I shall now explain.

It was a mild day in February ; the sun shone in dazzling brightness upon the snow, which was wasting under its influence. The hour for commencing the afternoon exercises had arrived, and, as I was returning in haste from the village, this little boy came round a corner of the wood, near the school.

house, and was going home. He was whirling something attached to a string round his head, which, in certain positions, glittered in the sunbeams. The moment he saw me, the string and its appendage were suddenly coiled, and concealed in his pocket, in a manner to excite suspicion. When we met, he sought to go by with his usual down-cast look; but I spoke to him kindly, and the following conversation took place :

“ My little man, where are you going ? ”

“ I'm going home, sir. ”

“ But it is school time now, and you would not like to be absent from school. ”

“ Mother said I must come home at noon. ”

“ But then you should have gone when school closed, and you might have returned by this time. ”

“ I want to go now. ”

“ Well, what was that you put in your pocket just now ? ”

“Nothing.”

“O, you must not say so. When you turned the corner of the wood, you was whirling a string, with something shining at the end of it; and then you saw me and put it in your pocket.”

“I hain’t got nothing but a plummet.”

“Well, I want you to let me see it.”

He then reluctantly pulled out a bright new plummet with its string, which I recognised as the one brought to school that morning by one of the oldest girls.

“Where did you find this?”

“I found it down there by the door.”

“But how shall I know that what you tell me is true? You know I have often told you that when boys are once detected in falsehood, we shall not know when to believe them. Now you just told me that you had put nothing in your pocket, when you had put this plummet in. That was a falsehood. You was trying to deceive me. And how shall I know that you are not deceiving me now?”

“ I *did* find it there, sartin ! ”

“ Well, now go back and show me just where it was, and I hope I shall find you have told me the truth.”

“ I want to go home : mother said I must.”

“ Well, go back to the school-house now : we must settle this matter first, and then I can tell better whether to believe your mother told you to come home or not. You have told what is not true once, and how can I know that your mother told you to come home ? ”

We were soon at the door of the school-house ; but it was with manifest faltering and misgiving that he pointed out the spot where he pretended that the plummet was found, and then he seemed to feel as if the falsehood was written upon his countenance. Without questioning him farther, as soon as the school was assembled and seated, I held up the plummet to view, and it was at once recognized by the owner, in a distant part of the school-room. Keeping him by me, and in such a posi-

tion that he could not possibly see the owner, I requested her to place her hand in the very place where the plummet was left. This was done, and immediately removed, and she resumed her seat. I then told him that I supposed he took the plummet from the school-house; and, if so, I wished him to be honest, and go and place it where he had taken it. He went and placed it in precisely the right place, which, under these circumstances, confirmed the evidence of his guilt. His conscience now appeared to be troubled, although perhaps his fears were more so. He wept bitterly, and yet nothing had been said to terrify him. I then took him by the hand, and, in as kind a manner as possible, explained to him the nature of his faults, and noticed the several instances of his falsehood. Then another scene came up.

“Now tell me,” (I said to him in a mild manner) “what you did with my pocket comb.”

“I never see it—I never took it, sar-tin.”

“ Well, perhaps not. But you know my comb was taken from the table here several weeks ago ; and, when I asked the scholars about it, and looked all round the room, to see how they should answer the question, you was the first and almost only one to say, “ I hain’t got it—I hain’t got it.” I did not think you stole it then, but you know I told all the scholars they must take care not to steal, because, if I should detect any one in stealing, I should be likely to think he took the comb. Now you have been caught in stealing a plummet, and you have told several falsehoods ; and how shall I know that you did not steal the comb. It is true that I do not know you took it ; but your denying it now that you have told several falsehoods, cannot be trusted, as if you had always told the truth. Now I wish you to think of it a little while, and see if you can tell me the whole truth. If you stole the comb, you had better say so honestly. You will feel happier afterwards, if you tell the truth. I do not

wish you to say you took it, unless you did actually do so, because that would be lying. I wish you to tell just the truth. It will be much better for you to do so than for me to find it out some other way. You may sit down here by yourself a little while, and then I will talk with you again."

After attending to some necessary duties of the school, as the little boy had become composed, I took him by the hand, and asked him if he was now prepared to tell me the whole truth.

"Yes, sir," was his reply.

"Well, then, what did you do with my comb?"

"I lost it."

"Then you took it from the table, did you?"

"Yes, sir."

The tears now began to flow in torrents, accompanied by sobs, as expressive of real sorrow as one can imagine.

"Well, now, tell me where upon the table you found it."

"I found it there," said he, pointing

to the very place where it had been left.

“ Was the comb open, like this knife blade, or was it shut up, when you found it ? ”

“ I found it open. ”

“ Well, what did you do with it ? ”

“ I put it in my pocket, and when we went out, I put it down by a little tree beyond the play-ground, and put some leaves over it. ”

“ Well, is it there now ? ”

“ I can't find it : I went to get it afterwards, but I could not find it ; and I have not seen it since. ”

“ Will you go with one of the boys, and show him where you left it, and look for it again ? ”

“ Yes, sir. ”

He led the scholar designated for this purpose to a concealed spot beyond the play-ground, and pointed out a little tree, and said he put it down by the side of that ; and he began to search for it among the leaves. Both of them engaged in the search, till they had re-

moved most of the leaves within several feet of the tree, and then returned without finding it. All these circumstances confirmed the conviction that he had now confessed the truth,—that he had stolen the comb, and lost it in the way described. The evidence of his sorrow was as apparent as the evidence of his guilt. But was this sufficient? Would this effect a cure, as well without corporeal punishment as with it? Would it be safe for the interests of the school to spare the rod in such a case? It was evident that every scholar felt a deep interest in the result of the case, and a deep sympathy for the little offender. But I dared not dismiss him without punishment, painful as it was to inflict it, and uncommon as it was in my practice. Taking him again by the hand, I said to him, “Well, sir, what do you think I ought to do now, to cure you of such faults? You have been guilty of two very wicked things, stealing and lying; and what is it my duty to do for you?”

“ You ought to punish me.”

“ Suppose I punish you with this heavy rule, how many times do you think I ought to strike you with it ? ”

“ Forty.”

“ Perhaps you deserve so many blows, but I should be glad to cure you without so severe a punishment. If I should strike very hard, so many blows would be hard to bear. I will think of it awhile, and then decide what will be necessary.”

Another hour was spent in the duties of the school, while the little boy sat in the silent anguish of suspense, heaving a deep and long drawn sigh, occasionally, and giving vent to an occasional flood of tears. Then calling him to me again, I endeavored to impress upon his mind the nature of his offences, and the pain it gave me to punish him for them. I then felt how sad a thing it is for a teacher not to be a Christian. I knew that the sanctions of religion ought to be brought to bear upon his mind, and upon the whole school, but

had no heart or courage to apply them. Concealing, however, as much as might be, the workings of conscience on this subject, and nerving for the conflict with my feelings, I told him I would forgive him without farther punishment, if I dared to do it; but I was afraid that it would not cure him; and I was afraid other scholars would take courage and steal too. But I shall not punish you so much as you think you deserve. I must leave something for your father to do. You must go home, after school, and tell your father that you stole the teacher's comb and a plummet, and told several lies about them, and got punished for this at school, and that the teacher says it is father's duty to punish you too. You have confessed the truth, I believe, in regard to the comb, and I shall not punish you so much as if I had found out the truth from some other person. I hope, too, you are sorry for it, and will not do such a thing again. I expect also that, hereafter, you will not play truant again,

but will be at school in season in the morning, and be active in trying to learn. So I shall not punish you with the heavy rule, but with this light one: I hope this will cure you. And I shall only give you ten blows instead of forty. I expect they will hurt you a good deal; but if they cure you of your faults, you will have reason to be glad that you were found out."

The punishment was then inflicted, and borne with much fortitude, and seemed to produce nearly as much effect upon the other scholars as upon himself. When his tears were wiped away, and he was composed, I again requested him to go home and tell his father what had happened, and that he ought also to punish him; and that, if he would hereafter be a good boy, I should love and respect him, as if nothing of the kind had occurred, and that the other scholars would treat him kindly. The scholars were then required to treat their little companion with kindness, and not to reproach him

with his faults or his punishment. He now thinks he shall be a good boy; and, if he is, all the scholars must treat him as such, and encourage him to continue so.

The next day was Saturday, and there was no school till Monday. It was intimated by some, that it would be more difficult to settle this affair with the father, than it had been with the son. Nothing, however, was heard from him till Sabbath evening. On returning from a meeting to the public house where I was boarding, several neighbors, with the father, were sitting in the bar-room, as it was not the custom there to observe this as a part of the Sabbath. As I entered, the father asked me to walk out with him. A momentary anxiety as to the result of the interview, did not prevent my complying with his request. When we were fairly by ourselves, he said, in a subdued tone, "I wanted to see you about my little boy." And here a flood of tears, for a moment, prevented farther

conversation. After he recovered from this overflow of feeling, he proceeded :

“What ought I to do with him ; must I whip him again ?”

“How does he appear, and what does he say ?” I inquired.

“Why, he came home tother night, and said he got punished at school, because he stole the master’s comb, and a plummet, and because he had told lies ; and that the master said his pa ought to whip him too. But then the little fellow begged so, and sobbed as if his heart would break, and I could not bear to whip him. But if you think it necessary, I will, hard as ’tis ; but I hate to do it. He is the best boy I have : he’s always so kind and willing ; and he pleads and promises so earnest, I can’t bear to punish him, but I will if you say so.” I assured him that if the boy had come home and frankly confessed his faults and seemed penitent as he described, I thought he might safely forgive him without further punishment. This seemed a great relief to

his feelings, and his whole appearance and conduct were so different from what was expected, that the interview was affectingly interesting. He alluded to his domestic calamity as connected with the delinquency of the boy ; but I did not then understand the full measure of his meaning, nor till I learned from other sources that the poor child had been systematically *taught to steal and lie by his drunken mother*. The idea was horrid ; but the proof of the fact was abundant. She had taught him to steal eggs from the neighbors' barns, and small articles from various sources, by which a few cents could be obtained to buy liquor. Her husband endeavored to keep liquor from her, but she taught this little boy to watch his opportunity and steal gin from the distillery, and to procure it at the stores and taverns, on false pretences. As the keepers of these establishments were forbidden to sell to her, she instructed the boy to say that his father sent him, and to give some reason for it. At one

time, he must say that his father had cut his finger, and wanted some spirit to bathe it ; at another, that father had the head ache, and at another that he had friends. Thus the appetite of the mother was gratified at the expense of the moral principle of the child. And where the matter would have ended but for the stolen plummet, no one can tell. This led to disclosures which, perhaps, saved the boy from the lowest stages of crime. The reformation in him in this respect, seemed complete. On Monday morning I was in school, at an early hour ; and found him there engaged with his book, while the other boys were at play about the house. He was no longer the little *truant boy*, nor was he an idler in school, nor was there occasion to censure him for any thing. From being the most backward, he became, in six or eight weeks, the most faithful scholar in learning his lessons, and stood at the head of his class as often as any of his comrades.

But this reformation was a vexation

to his drunken mother. She could no more prevail on him to steal or lie for the gratification of her thirst. * *

A few months only passed away, before that mother found means to help herself. She broke into the distillery, and drank a quantity of "high wines," and in a few hours was a bloated corpse.

* * * The winter following, this little boy was again my pupil, in the same school, and a happier boy is not often to be met with. A powerful revival of religion occurred in the neighborhood: the school-house was a Bethel. The teacher had no such struggles with conscience on the subject of religious instruction as is noticed above. Many of the scholars, from week to week, were seen weeping over their books, or retiring to the forest, where the pocket-comb was lost, to vent their sorrows in secret prayer. Some who thus went weeping, returned with the smile of joyful hope upon their countenance. More than twenty of the schol-

ars expressed hope of an interest in the Savior; and among the number was this little *truant boy*. He had then a quiet home, rendered cheerful by the attentions of a kind step-mother, and his affectionate disposition won the hearts of those who knew him. His love for his teacher was unbounded, and his progress in study rapid and uniform. * *

A few years after this, while passing through the place, I was gratified to meet this pupil, now a large boy, and to hear a good account of him from his employers. This good account has been confirmed by all reports from him up to this period, and gives strength to the hope that the *reclaimed truant boy* may become a useful man.

THE "GENEROUS HEARTED."

Who does not desire, at times, to know the real wants and sufferings of the poor, not to make them objects of derision and wanton remark, but to share in the sympathy which their circumstances demand? For one, I would not be deprived the privilege of sympathizing with the real sufferings of the poor, for all the ease and plenty and luxury of the rich. And sufferings *described*, I could never sympathize with as with those I could see in their own dark cell. And why not enter the lowly hut of poverty, although a stranger, perchance, to see and sooth a widowed mother, to dry an orphan's tears, or to beguile its aching heart by a simple story of God's goodness to others in like circumstances.

With such feelings I knocked at the door of a low, miserable hut, one sun-

ny afternoon in December, and was welcomed by a woman of forty-five or fifty years of age, whose countenance bespoke the recollection of better days, and happier prospects shrouded in the gloom and sadness of present sufferings and withered hopes. There was no wood-pile at the door, and the walls of the dwelling had been robbed to kindle the warmth within. The poor cow seemed to disdain her open, cheerless hovel, and hovered round the door of the house, as if suffering with hunger, and the noisy geese seemed aggravated, and in their way resented her encroachments, and disputed the territory with her inch by inch. The chimney top was broken down nearly to the roof, and the glass had disappeared from the windows; its place was supplied with shingles, old hats and rags; and scarcely glass enough remained to afford sufficient light for the performance of domestic duties. Of furniture, there was little remaining, and some of that sadly disfigured, as if violence

dwelt there. Some of the chairs were broken, and others nearly destitute of seats, although repaired with strings and cords. Every feature told of wretchedness,—and yet there was something which seemed to say that this woman and her daughter, (the only persons I saw on entering,) were doing as well as they could.

Both looked sorrowful, and yet endeavored to be cheerful. There was an air of neatness in their plain cheap dress, and both were busily employed with their needles repairing dresses for small children. The floor was as clean as such a floor could be made with a brush-broom, and the few articles of crockery were neatly arranged in the lower part of an open cupboard, that stood in the corner. On the upper shelf of the same cupboard, were some suspicious looking things that seemed to belong to another owner, and as I supposed the owner to be a widow, it was difficult to account for them. In the corner, too, was something inexplica-

ble. A pile of bed-blankets and rugs presented an unusual appearance ; but it was partly concealed by the mother, who sat near it. Without seeming to notice any thing, except the mother and daughter and their employments, after passing remarks on the pleasantness of the day, our conversation turned upon a subject which would naturally come up.

“You have other children beside this daughter, I suppose, as you are preparing dresses for them.”

“Yes, I have four others, but they are all young. Two of them go to school.”

It was soon manifest that the other two had been put away to bed, so that their clothes could be washed and mended. Their little eyes could now be seen peeping out through the cracks between the rough boards that separated the bedroom from the other apartment.

“Your husband is dead, I suppose ; how long has he been dead ?”

“No, my husband is living ; he lies

here in the corner by the fire. He is not well."

A deep sigh, as she uttered this reply, and a deep blush on the countenance of the daughter, told more plainly than words could tell, that the secret of their poverty and sorrows was revealed. But to make the matter still more plain, if possible, the mysterious bed-blankets began to move, and soon disclosed a huge and frightful visage. There was the wreck of a man, above the usual size, of fair proportions, and who, in other days, must have been qualified for better scenes. But his face was carbuncled and bloated, his eyes blood-shot, his hair and beard long and filthy, his lips pealed and blistered; his voice was unearthly, and his limbs seemed to defy his control. His boisterous salutation, which seemed designed as a friendly greeting, was frightful, as he was laboring to balance on his elbow, and extricate his feet from the pile of blankets. After repeated efforts, he secured something near an upright

position ; but his knees trembled, and his whole frame was palsied. He could walk but little, and that little required the frequent help of chairs. He grasped my hand with an unnatural shake, and thanked me for calling to see poor folks. He declared that he had not always been so poor, that he used to live in that white house yonder, and live like other folks. "But, O," said he, "I have been unfortunate. They have got my property all away from me.—But I've got some fine children. That's my oldest daughter. Aint she a slick girl ? And I've got four others, and they are as good as any body's children, I tell you."

The stench of rum and tobacco which his scorching breath was pouring out, all this time, was intolerable ; and the poor wife and daughter seemed indescribably wretched, almost incapable of using their needles. By this time he was suffering with thirst, and apologized for not offering me "something to drink" before. He staggered away to

the cupboard, and took down a black earthen jug, with the handle broken off, and a cob in the place of a cork. Placing this on the light-stand, with a broken tumbler, and a tea-cup of molasses, "Come, sir, come," said this poor object, "let us take a little of the good stuff."

"No, sir, I don't make use of that sort of stuff. That is not *good* stuff."

"But why not?"

"Because it makes men silly, spoils them for business, makes the breath smell bad, and destroys common sense, and domestic happiness. It makes children ashamed of their parents, and mothers weep in secret places. And it prepares men to commit all sorts of crimes, or carries them hastily into a loathsome grave."

"Ho, I guess you mean to twit upon facts, don't you?"

"I am stating facts, and leave men to see for themselves where they apply."

"I can't argue with you yet; I am too *dry*. I know a little don't hurt me. So here's a health to you."

It was in vain to reason the case with him, or to urge him not to drink the filthy poison. I begged of him to have mercy on his wife and children, and for their sake to abandon the use of spirits. But he was too drunk to be moved by argument or entreaty. Having swallowed an immoderate dose, he returned to his corner, and enveloped himself as well as he could in the blankets, muttering the praises of his wife and children, and cursing his hard luck in the world.

“Is there no help for it? Can nothing be done to save us from all this misery?”

Such was the language of the bursting, stricken heart of this care-worn mother. The appeal was affecting. Of course there was no help unless he would abandon his cups. I assured her that some as far gone as her husband, had been reclaimed, and if he could be prevailed upon to do as they had done, there was hope.

“But he will not give it up. He loves us all, but he loves rum more.”

“And have you tried what prayer can do?”

“How can I pray with such a load upon my spirit? O! if I were a widow, and my children fatherless, I could have some hope of securing the favor of the widow’s God. But what prayer shall I now offer, and with what hope of acceptance?”

I could not but secretly pray for her, “O God, have mercy on the thousands of widows whose husbands are not dead, and the tens of thousands of more than orphans, whose fathers are not yet in their graves.” After commending her and her family to the mercy of God, I left them, desiring to know more of their history than I could think of drawing from her own lips.

* * * The “white house” to which the wretched man had pointed, attracted my attention, and I soon introduced myself to its possessor; and after inquiries relative to the object of my visit, I inquired after the family in the miserable hovel I had just left.

“I know their history well,” said the

gentleman. “That man, in early life, was the pride of his associates. He was handsome and amiable, and might have been now the possessor of an immense fortune. He owned all that extensive granite quarry, and built this house, and might have been the sole owner of the whole. But he was a *generous hearted creature*, and never could deny himself a social glass. The love of drink grew upon him, he made bad calculations, and became involved, so that about the time the granite began to be in demand, he was obliged to give up the whole, and his course has been downward, till he has become the most loathsome of drunkards, and his family suffer from want. He will sell every thing his wife can procure, if he can lay hands upon it, and buy liquor to lie drunk with, and sometimes abuse his family unmercifully.

WHO ARE ITS VICTIMS ?

“ But you have a daughter; and she, at least, you are sure must escape. In due time, she is united to the husband of her choice and yours, and all your hopes, are realized. You behold them living in peace and love. But the tempter comes into their bower of Eden. The man begins to taste the forbidden cup; he indulges in his glass at the social board; by degrees the appetite increases; it grows as time rolls on, till this once tender husband and father becomes morose and unkind, no longer attracted by the endearments of his wife, or the caresses of his children. He becomes the tyrant of his family.”—P. SPRAGUE.

It was on the fertile banks of one of the most delightful of those New England rivers, too small for navigation, that I sat down by the cheerful fire-side of an enterprising young man, who had located himself in the little village not long before. He had married a lovely daughter of Mrs. —, who was familiarly called the Widow —. The

mother and another daughter were members of the family, and made up, altogether, an interesting group. The country was yet comparatively new, and religious privileges, of a public nature, few and far between. But the mother and her daughters had held delightful communion with the church of Christ in the place of their former residence ; and a sweet spirit of piety breathed through the intercourse of the family, and made it a desirable retreat for the weary missionary, while surveying the moral wastes of the region. There was something in the countenance, delicate frame, elevated intellect, and cultivated manners, of the mother, and in the impress which the daughters had apparently received from her forming hands, that fixed the conviction, after a short acquaintance, that this mother was of no mean origin, nor destitute of early advantages. There was a chastened feeling evidently pervading all the intercourse of this mother with her family and her guest,—a

tinge of sorrow even, in her lighted joyous countenance, which seemed to say that some grievous wound had been inflicted, deeper than the ordinary inflictions of widowhood. On one occasion, when an opportunity occurred for uninterrupted conversation, I inquired how long she had been a widow. She replied, with a suppressed sigh, "My husband, I suppose, is still living." I had not courage to ask another question, fearing to press inquiries which had too long and too deeply stung a delicate heart, and almost destroyed a once vigorous constitution. After a few moments of silence, she continued: "My lot, as a mother, has been peculiar, and is a striking comment on the uncertainty of the fairest prospects, and the fallacious character of youthful hopes. My grandfather was Dr. —, the first president of — college. My mother was a cherished daughter, and received the best advantages which, at that day, could be secured. He gave her cheerfully in marriage to my father,

who was one of the earliest professors in the college, and their united and self-denying efforts were constantly in exercise, to train up their children in the way they should go. Early in life, with the approbation of both parents, I accepted the hand of Dr. — L—. Our attachment was mutual, ardent, and of long standing. He had been a beloved and successful student in the college, and received nearly the highest honors of his class, as well as the respect and attachment of his associates. At the time of our marriage, he was settled as a physician and surgeon, and had acquired unusual celebrity for a practitioner of his years. His circuit of practice was large and lucrative. He was a kind husband, and a faithful counsellor. Years of happiness passed away, and a lovely family of children was growing up around us, to add to our joys no less than to our cares. * *

But a sad change—a dark cloud came over our bright horizon. My husband became addicted to intemper-

ance, and it changed his whole nature. In the place of kindness and affection, there was cutting reproach, injury and abuse. The community, at that period, slept over this vice, and I was myself blind to it, till my husband was ruined, and peace had fled from our dwelling. Then remonstrance and entreaty came too late. He had seasons of relenting, but did not reform. Liquor seemed to make him insane, and rage and fury were the characteristics of the man, who, for years, had been the best of husbands, the kindest of fathers. Often, when he returned home late at night, myself and children trembled with terror at his approach. Many a time I was obliged to make my escape from our bed-room window, with an infant in my arms, drawing after me another little one that slept in the same room, as the only means of saving our lives. At length, worn out with fear and hardship, I was constrained to leave him, as the safety of my life and the lives of our children seemed to demand this

painful step. This took a strong hold of his feelings ; for, in his sober moments, he loved us tenderly. He abandoned his cups, and was a sober man, and began to attend to his neglected business, and to regain public confidence. His mind was strongly impressed with religious truth, and he appeared truly penitent. I could not refuse to live with him again, and for a time we were happy, and he seemed to be a reformed man. But he was at length overcome again by his ruling passion. His intemperance, and consequent insanity returned with renewed fury, and myself and children narrowly escaped with our lives, in repeated paroxysms of his rage. I dared not live with him longer ; and, after this, I was legally divorced from him. His habits continued and increased upon him, till he sunk to the lowest stages of debauchery, and married an abased woman, as abandoned as himself. She, I believe, is since dead, and he still lives, the mere wreck of his former self. My

heart bleeds at the recital, and the recollections of former days : but in all this I view the hand of a kind heavenly Father, supporting and leading me onward through trials I could not otherwise endure. I cannot cease to love him. There is a feeling in my heart that cannot die. Neither time nor place can extinguish it : but the grace of God can enable me to endure it. It is a privilege still to pray, and hope for his reformation. And it is a precious consolation, that none of his children follow in his steps. All of them are coming forward in life in circumstances to add to a mother's joy, and attest the faithfulness of our heavenly Father's promise."

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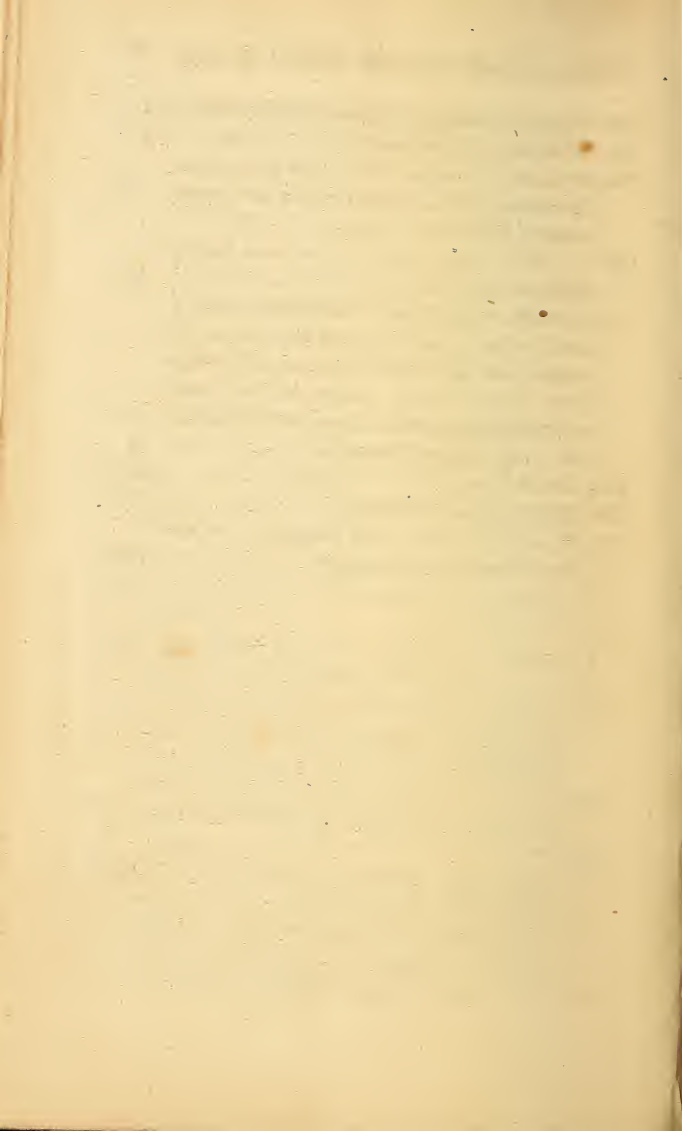
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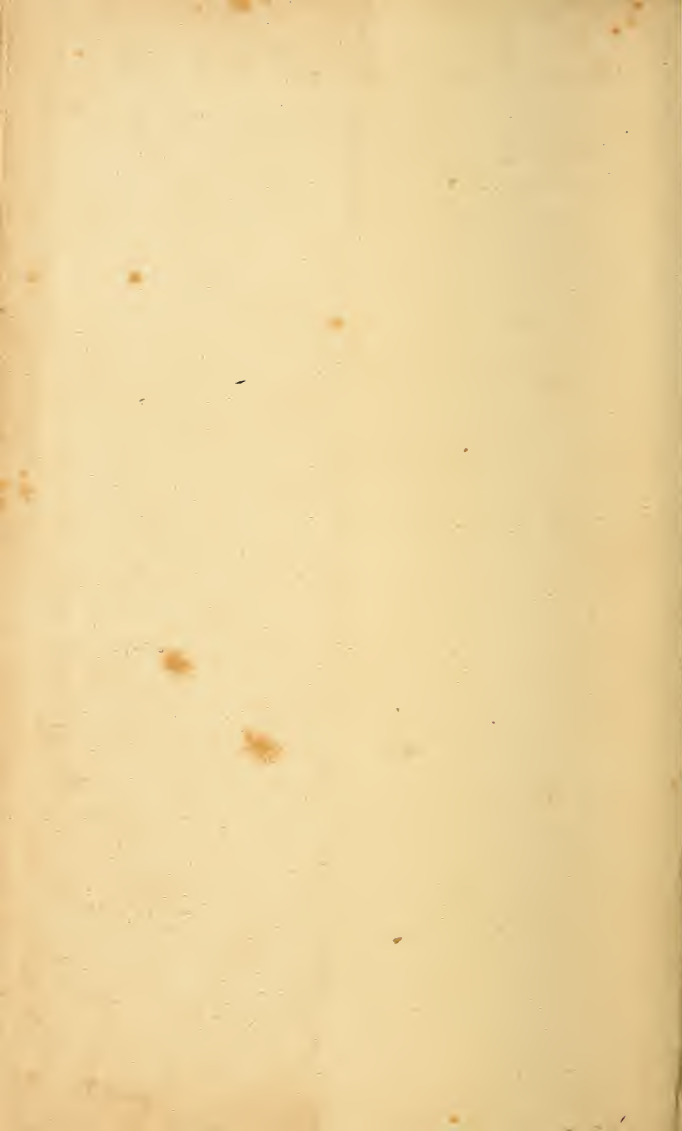
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