



Queen Victoria on Temperance

It will be seen from the following correspondence that Her Majesty took an interest in the temperance movement at a very early period of her long and happy reign.

Mr. C. E. Delevan, one of the foremost temperance men in the United States (who died in 1871), sent four volumes of temperance tales, written by L. M. Sargent, Esq., richly bound, to Queen Victoria, through her consul at New York, with the following letter:—

'Ballston Centre, Saratoga County,
'State of New York, October 22, 1837.
'To Her Most Gracious Majesty,
'The Queen of England.

'Permit me to ask your Majesty's acceptance of the small volumes accompanying this. The tales contained in them are founded on facts. Their extensive circulation in this country has, with the blessing of God, been the means of turning very many from the destructive paths of intemperance; and prevented thousands of others from entering upon the downward course, by inducing them to abstain entirely from all those drinks which produce intoxication. The great discovery has been made by hundreds of thousands in this, and in other lands, that all liquors containing alcohol are never useful, but always injurious to persons in health. Time and fashion have long upheld the common use of intoxicating drinks; but this cannot render such use right or expedient, seeing the immense amount of crime and wretchedness that has, in all ages, and in all places followed as the legitimate effect of such use. It is our belief that at least one million of our adult population in America have already abandoned the common use of such drinks from this entire conviction, of their always injurious and never useful effect. For nine years I have been a very attentive observer of the uniform effect of the use of intoxicating drinks, and have watched the temperance reformation with the most intense interest; have collected much testimony from every quarter; but I have never seen or heard of an individual, who had for any length of time totally abstained from the use of all such drinks, whose testimony was not fully in favor of this new principle. It is now universally admitted in this country that no other principle possesses any power to reform the poor drunkard; it is also established, beyond all question, that the intoxicating principle of alcohol is the product, not of distillation, but of fermentation.

'In this country it has been found that the example of those in exalted stations is all powerful in carrying forward this great enterprise. It is in the power of a few in any country to eradicate a pernicious custom, no matter how popular, or of how long standing. Can those who occupy high positions expect that those below them will be much reformed or benefited by their precepts while their example teaches a different lesson?

'I resided seven years in England. I was then convinced, and I now feel assured, that could the entire population of Great Britain be induced to abandon the use of alcoholic drinks as a beverage, and thus prevent the productions of her soil from destruction, and worse than destruction, by the brewer and distiller, and save them for food—poverty and crime would almost cease;

emigration would not take place, as a matter of necessity; universal prosperity, in every branch of industry, would prevail; and the country, in all its interests, assume an appearance of youthful vigor and beauty.

'May I beg your Majesty to read these little volumes? I almost venture to promise that the perusal of the first story (which has already passed through over one hundred editions) will create an interest in the heart of your Majesty for those that follow.

'Our fervent prayer is that England, the land of our fathers, may experience her full share of the benefit of this great reformation; and that the hearts of its advocates may be cheered and their hands strengthened by the noble example of her young and beloved Queen giving it her approbation and support. If, as I fear, my zeal for this cause has made me trespass too far, and I have taken too great a liberty, I will trust to your Majesty to pardon my presumption, and think only of my motive.

'May a kind providence ever watch over your Majesty, and enable you to view this important subject aright; and may your life be spared to be a rich blessing to your own people and the whole world, shall ever be the prayer of — Your Majesty's most obedient, humble servant,

'EDWARD C. DELEVAN.'

QUEEN VICTORIA'S ANSWER.

'St. James Palace, Jan. 8, 1838.

'Sir,—I have had the honor to submit your letter to Her Majesty, and have sincere pleasure in being able to inform you that the Queen has been very graciously pleased to acquiesce in the request therein expressed, and to accept of the four small volumes of temperance tales which accompanied it. Her Majesty was pleased at the same time to command me to convey to you the expression of her entire satisfaction at this mark of your attention. The subject, indeed, could not fail to create great interest. The efforts which are now making both in America and this country for the suppression of the besetting sin of intemperance cannot but meet with Her Majesty's approbation; and I think it will be gratifying for you to know that those passages of your letter which relate to your residence in England, and the effects likely to be produced here by an abandonment of this pernicious vice, are fully appreciated, and more particularly that passage which assures Her Majesty that 'your fervent prayer is that England, the land of our fathers, may experience her full share of this great reformation.'—I have the honor, sir, to be your most obedient servant,

'J. H. GLOVER,

'Her Majesty's Librarian.

'To Edward C. Delevan, Ballston Centre,
'Saratoga County, State of New York.'
—'Temperance Record.'

Two Boys.

(By Ernest Gilmore.)

They went to school together, and played together, these two boys, David Street, and Percy Hale. They were healthy, hearty little lads, with sunny faces and kind hearts. But their circumstances in life differed widely. Percy's father was a well-to-do farmer, and his home was a delightful one. David lived with his widowed mother in a little cabin, which had few comforts and no luxuries. Mrs. Street worked very hard to get enough to make the wheel go round, but she did not complain.

'When my laddie grows up,' she said, cheerily, 'he'll work for me.'

'Let me work for you now, mamma,' he

begged. 'I'm a big boy, ten years old,' stretching himself up to his greatest height.

His mother laughed, and then said soberly:

'You must get an education first, my boy, after which you can do better work.'

'What kind of work can I do, mamma?' he asked, eagerly.

'Time will tell.'

'I wish I was a man now,' he said; 'I'd earn a lot of money, and then I'd buy a house for you, mamma—for you and me. I'd like one like Percy's. Oh, wouldn't it be jolly, mamma?'

Mrs. Street smiled in the eager little face, then she sighed.

Days, weeks, months, and years passed on. David went to school regularly. He made steady progress. Out of school he helped his mother in various ways, and often found time to play with Percy Hale.

David had only one objection to going to the Hales', viz.: there was always a cider barrel on tap. It began in the early fall when the cider was sweet, and kept on right through the year.

David was urged to 'help himself,' but he never did.

'I have signed the pledge,' he said.

'But this is sweet cider,' Percy explained.

'Cider doesn't keep sweet,' asserted David; 'anyway water's good enough for me.'

So when he was thirsty he quenched his thirst at the old well, and when Percy wanted a drink he visited the cider barrel. The more of a 'twang' there was to the cider the better he liked it.

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Twenty years have passed since you first met the two boys, so, of course, you would not recognize the men of thirty. Percy Hale's father and mother were dead, and Percy lived alone with a faithful old housekeeper. The once pretty and well-kept home was much in need of repair, so was the master of the house.

One fair June day, when the sweet June roses were all abloom in the front yard, the old home went under the hammer and Percy was cast adrift. He was already so bound with the chain of intemperance that he looked like a man of fifty.

The same day in a house sixty miles distant, David Street, C. E., stood with his arms about his mother. All about them were 'green things growing,' and the scent of roses. They were sitting on the verandah of a beautiful Queen Anne cottage, which was a gem in every way.

'It seems like a dream, David,' Mrs. Street said, smiling through tears of joy, 'I cannot realize that this beautiful home is really ours. That you, my blessed boy, have earned it.'

'If it hadn't been for you, mother, I couldn't have done it. It was that pledge, mother; that and God's hand, kept me true to my purpose.'—'Temperance Banner.'

If there were no temperate drinking, there would be none that is intemperate. Men do not generally begin by what is usually called immoderate indulgence, but that which they regard as moderate. Let it be remembered, then, that what is usually styled temperate drinking stands as the condition precedent to that which is intemperate. Discontinue one, and the other becomes impossible. And what is the cause of moderate drinking? Is it the force of natural appetite? Rarely. Nine tenths, if not ninety-nine hundredths, of those who use alcoholic stimulants, do it, in the first instance, and often for a long time, not from appetite, but from deference to custom or fashion. They 'look' on the wine. — Bishop Potter.