



Temperance Department.

A SEVEN YEARS' ATTEMPT AT MODERATION.

BY A JOURNALIST.

By seven years' attempt at moderate drinking I have probably acquired the right to say a few words on the great social problem of the age—Is alcohol the abused friend or the inevitable foe of man?

I arrived in London an abstainer, and was soon told, with conceited frankness, that total abstinence was not practicable in the exigencies of town life; that it was all very well "out in the clear" where nature had fair play, but that it had been tried and found wanting in the artificial and severe conditions of modern civilization. After three months' literary work in the metropolis, I certainly did experience a lassitude and loss of appetite which I had not previously felt in the country; and a too liberal use of tea and coffee resulted in my suspecting the principles of total abstinence. I was, however, still mindful of the grave fact that many of my friends had disappeared long before their time, and I was not always thoroughly assured that the cause of their deaths was fully explained by the doctor's certificate. I attached myself to the church of my persuasion, and well remember the "prime old port" which I tasted at the Communion table. It was there that I was assailed by the evil suggestion that such good wine could not fail to have a restorative effect upon my system. By a kind of specious reasoning I was allured into a cautious consumption of wine, beer, etc., and mistaking the fictitious invigoration for newly imparted strength, I triumphantly believed that alcohol was unjustly maligned by teetotalers. I had then, as I foolishly imagined, attained to a liberty far more rational than the "unnatural restrictions" of abstinence. Kind members of the church oft-times invited me to dinner, and as they took wine, occasionally whiskey, after, I became fully convinced that I had before been in grievous bondage. Of course having gained my "freedom" I was not slow to join them; I thought it was safe to emulate their orthodox example. I was not, however, altogether free from slight misgivings, because I felt that the wine and spirits disturbed my accustomed meditation on the sermon, and materially hindered my usual enjoyment of the evening service. But such fugitive fears were summarily put down to over-sensitiveness, and as one of our deacons invariably offered me "something hot" when I was his guest, I easily persuaded myself that it would never do to be too precise in "small things." In this way I made steady progress. Just in proportion as my consumption of alcohol increased, my regularity in attendance at church decreased. I could not then see that the arch-deceiver was secretly disabling my spiritual susceptibilities, and exposing me to temptations which I had previously, by the grace of God, effectually resisted. I did not then appear to know that the grace of God was never designed or given to interfere with His beautiful laws, nor that He had endowed me with reason and common sense to protect my body from things unsuitable and hurtful. Soon I was overtaken by the secret fall and its bitter consequences. I reproached myself for "abusing" alcohol, and by earnest prayer strove to reach unto a "Christian" use of it, as I still thought it was essential to my existence. For short periods I managed to limit myself to a "discreet" quantity, and often sanguinely assumed that I had achieved a lasting victory. My "victories" were only partial and fitful, and nearly always followed by humiliating defeat. And here I solemnly declare that from the moment of my departure from total abstinence my life has been a tale of moral disaster. And now for the most important question—Why? The grace of God was and is all-powerful; my prayers for deliverance were sincere. My captivity was solely and exclusively due to my mistaking a foe for a friend. Here, and here only, is the source from which the true temperance reformation must always take its rise. It is sheer trifling to counsel men to "govern" their appetites whilst they continue to use an article which mocks, because it destroys self-control. The strongest resolutions and the most vigilant watchfulness are powerless to arrest the effects of alcohol, and the most devout prayers cannot avail to annul the recognized law of cause and effect.

I eagerly read the articles which appeared in the *Contemporary Review*, but I found nothing to shake the position of the well-informed and well-grounded abstainer. All the eminent contributors appear to have written with

poorly-suppressed doubt and hesitancy, and the total of their united opinions amounts rather to an apology for, than to a justification of, the moderate use of alcohol. Their faltering and equivocal verdict in favor of indefinable moderation is to me very encouraging, because it clearly proves that the light of scientific truth is extending in coveted directions. The vigorous and fully-rounded lives of the great multitude of teetotalers cannot be ignored even by the West-End physicians of London. On the one hand they see health and safety, and hear that final "Amen" of satisfied nature; on the other, the blood-stained track of an enemy which is, and can only be, harmless when not used dietetically.

The scapegoat of superficial minds—adulteration—is not now held to be so responsible as formerly for the doings of drink. If the purity of alcohol could have barred the way to excessive indulgence, the number of deaths in the ranks of the wealthy would have been less notorious. Gentlemen of competent means are generally careful to purchase wines and spirits of the "choicest quality," but they have died, and are dying, at a rate sad to contemplate. Neither education nor social status can save men if they expose the regulative power of the will to the paralyzing influence of alcohol.

And yet they themselves refuse to forego the absolutely valueless glass of beer and wine in order that they might strengthen their weaker and sorely-tempted brethren by the guiding light of their example! The world is not to be won to purity and truth by such a spurious manifestation of the Gospel in the lives of its accredited ministers.

I unhesitatingly affirm that my resolutions to abstain always encountered the most subtle temptations in the households of "good friends"; and I quite agree with a recent utterance of Mr. Gough, that this will continue so long as alcohol finds a place on the tables of church-going people. By a mistaken "courtesy" they unwittingly become the tempters of many young persons who reasonably think that they are safe from all peril in such society. It is worse than idle to bewail the moral ruin of our brothers sisters and if we, by our fashionable but unchristian cowardice, countenance the cause of their enslavement. The injury done to the "lungs and livers" of men is small compared with the blighting hurt done to their higher nature. I wish distinguished and honored medical leaders would give increasing prominence to that fact, and be a little more guarded in their incidental admissions as to the probable value of the enemy in "certain cases of indigestion."



REV. MR. PARENT.



MRS. PARENT.



"ARLEY."



RACHEL.

THE OKA MISSIONARY AND HIS FAMILY.

It is the distinguishing prerogative of religion to uproot everything that stands in the way of the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. But whilst alcohol is suffered to have free course in the social circle and in many homes of reputed Christians, how can the Church consistently look or wait for the dawn of the "better day"? And how can our Legislature hope for the "elevation of the masses" whilst their greatest enemy is permitted to menace and endanger their safety in every high-way of our cities, towns, and villages? Year after year ministers of the Gospel have witnessed the appalling prosperity of alcoholic agencies with unenviable fortitude, and when the enemy has come nigh unto their own dwellings they have conferred with flesh and blood rather than led the way to perfect security. They have seen eminent preachers dragged from the pulpit into hopeless bondage and darkness by alcohol, and yet they have too often and too long turned a deaf ear to those who besought their aid to help the unregenerate crowd in its daily, ceaseless struggle with the foe. By virtue of their vocation they constrain us to regard them as believers in the doctrine of substitution. They teach us that the faith which does not yield the fruits of self-denial and self-sacrifice is not the faith which they

I have once and for all done with the vaunted innocence of home-brewed ale and the reputed harmlessness of those private wines which require "just a little spirit" to preserve them. Alcohol is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, no matter in what form it is presented; and as we have no promise that the law of the body will be changed, the tendency of it will ever be to deceive and to kill. We are sometimes told by a few "deep thinkers" that alcohol is a "good creature of God"; and yet the very same persons, in their easy moods of virtuous indignation, vehemently denounce it as "the curse of the country"! Well may we exclaim, in the memorable words of the ruler of the Jews, "How can these things be?"—*London Temperance Record.*

"AIN'T PIGS STRONG?"

I lived in Ninth Street in New York. And I had lately got my arms into a round-about and my legs into boots. Stiff, shiny boots, with plenty of squeak in them, and with red tops and straps. Boots big enough for a young man of full nine years of age. I have never been such a hero since—never been half as old or great a man—as when I mounted

those boots. How I did stride and strut and look down at them! There was no need of putting the best foot forward. I hadn't any foot that was not best. I pitied all poor unfortunates who knew nothing of the glory of new boots.

But about that pig. Ninth street, where I lived, was in those days at about the north end of the city—near the jumping-off place. In fact, within about ten rods of that same place. For between us and Tenth street there was a hill about half dug away, from the top of which we boys used to jump off down into the loose sand and fill our shoes with the sand, and go home with dirty stockings. Folks have lumbered up our play-ground since with big three-story houses. But in those good old times boys could run right across from one street to the other, and pigs could wander at their own sweet wills.

I rather think I was just getting beaten at hop-scootch—and disgusted with the game, of course—when one of these bristly fellows came along the street, and a bright idea struck me. We would catch him and have a ride! That we would. What were pigs for, but to give a body a ride!

But the first thing was to catch him. Nothing easier than that. So, into the house I darted, and pounced upon Bridget's clothes line. Bran new, clean line, that Bridget didn't know any better than to hang shirts and collars and sheets on. But it was just the thing to catch pigs with—as you shall see.

One end of the rope was made into a slip noose, and the other end I got one of the fellows to tie tight round my waist. The plan was, you see, to lay down the noose in the street for piggy to "put his feet in it," and then for me to lean back in those new boots and pull him in. Capital plan. Sure to work to perfection. The other fellows would have been glad to hold the rope, and have some of the glory. But I couldn't allow it. Not that there was not enough of it (of the glory, that is—not the rope) to go round and give every boy a share. But I wanted it all myself. It was enough for the rest of them to have the fun of looking on. And they began to think so themselves before long.

I said it was a capital plan, and sure to work. But, somehow, there was a hitch about it. No, not a hitch exactly; I wished with all my soul there was, when operations had begun. But the plan didn't work—and a more disgusted urchin than I was you never saw in your life.

Piggy stepped into the noose; there was no trouble about that. And the noose slipped down tight around his leg. All right so far. But when the time came for pulling in, pig, rope and boy all went in the wrong direction. It was highly improper. It was not down in the plan. I didn't approve of it. But there was no help for it. After that squealing brute I went—stumbling, sprawling, up again, catching at every stoop-railing, shouting to the boys to hold him in, and discovering suddenly that friendship, in a selfish world, is but a hollow name. For I grieve to say that they stood and laughed and roared as if their sides would burst.

But a lamp-post that we passed soon proved a friend in need—a friend indeed. For, whilst piggy ran on one side of it, I, having no affection for him, and willing to part company, took the other. That brought him up all standing, for the lamp-post wouldn't budge. So he squealed and kicked and tugged till he worked his leg out of the noose, and left, without taking leave, for parts unknown. As for me, I wriggled out of the noose at my end of the rope and tramped back home, dragging Bridget's clothes line, a sadder and a wiser youth. When I arrived there, I marched into the parlor, where my big brothers were at a game of chess, and remarked to one of them, thoughtfully, "I tell you what Bert, ain't pigs strong!"

And from that day to this, when I see a young man going into low, vile company, and boasting that he shall lead them—not they him; or putting himself into the noose of some brutish habit, thinking he can manage it and stop when he chooses, I feel like telling him, Take care! pigs are strong! Take care!—*Uncle Ned, in Congregationalist.*

ALWAYS REMEMBER, no one can debase you but yourself. Slander, satire, falsehood, injustice—these can never rob you of your manhood. Men may lie about you, they may denounce you, they may cherish suspicions manifold, they may make you the target of their wit or cruelty; never be alarmed; never swerve an inch from the line of your judgment and conscience have marked out for you. They cannot by all their efforts, take away your knowledge of yourself, the purity of your character, and the generosity of your nature. While these are left, you are, in a point of fact, unharmed.—*Hints for Daily Life.*