



The Habit of Treating.

ITS EVILS BEING RECOGNIZED BY NON-ABSTAINERS.

The habit of treating is as old as the human race. It is the most ancient rite of hospitality. No doubt Job spread before his friends something wherewithal to refresh their inner men before they sat down to mourn with him in the land of Uz. The Bedouin gives the stranger food and drink when he enters his tent and pursues and plunders him when he has left it. The wayfarer was ever welcome at the table of the Saxon manor-house, and he who last went under the table showed the most appreciation of its lord's bounty.

The notion that the possession of a generous nature is best proved by filling one's guests' or one's friends' stomachs, whether they are hungry or thirsty or not, has flourished instead of decayed in the sunlight of civilization. Treating was formerly a prerogative of man only. Now, however, women are treaters on a large scale. Each season they give innumerable receptions and dinner parties, and every woman who accepts invitations to social functions is required by inviolable conventions also to give them. But men, especially American men, are still the most generous treaters. Does a man want to get business from another man? He gives him a drink. Does he wish to cultivate another's friendship or show himself a 'good fellow'? He gives him a drink—perhaps two drinks. If six men, or a dozen, all acquaintances, happen to enter a drinking place together, it is not unlikely that each will buy a drink for the crowd before they leave, and that all will go forth more less wobbly in their underpinning.

If men treated one another as women do, to salad, and ice cream, or if, like women, they did not reciprocate their treats for a week or for several weeks, they would, like women, suffer no worse effects from them than occasional attacks of indigestion. But the treating habit, as it prevails among men, is one of the nation's principal manufacturers of spendthrifts and drunkards. The anti-Treating League of America has been started by travelling men to abate the evil. It is a practical movement in favor not of total abstinence, but of real temperance. It is desirable not that the indulgence of the world old spirit of hospitality and good fellowship shall be discouraged, but that the excesses which that spirit has led to shall be repressed. Any league having this aim deserves to be encouraged.—'Chicago Tribune.'

A Judge on Gambling.

Judge Heydon, when sentencing a young man who was convicted of embezzlement, and attributed his downfall to horse-racing, said:—'A man who took money to gamble with when he was not driven to do so through necessity, was simply urged by a passion or a love for gambling. The present case was one of the many he had had experience of since he had been on the Bench. Here was a young man only twenty-six years of age, who had worked with intelligence and trustworthiness for nine years, and who had a wife and two children depending upon him, brought to ruin and disgrace through his passion for gambling.' 'Gambling,' concluded his Honor, 'is one of the deadliest cancers in the community.'—'Australian Christian World.'

How He Got His 'Rare Old Port.'

A story is told of a member of the London Stock Exchange who, while living in a fashionable quarter of the West End, chanced to buy a large cask of very fine old port, which he had placed at the extreme end of his cellar, and, to make perfectly sure that it would

not be touched, he had a wall built across the cellar, and so closed it in.

About a year or two later he accepted an invitation to dine with his next-door neighbor. The latter brought out some very fine old port. Several glasses having been drunk, the man of stocks and shares asked his host where he could get some like it.

'Well, old fellow' returned the other, 'I will tell you about it. I was having some alterations made in my cellar lately, when we discovered that some old fool who lived in this house before me had built a wall around a large cask of port and had forgot all about it. This is some of it, but I'm afraid there isn't much left.'

And there wasn't.—'National Advocate.'

The Wedding Ring's Story.

(John Rhodes, C.M., in the 'Temperance Leader and League Journal'.)

(Continued.)

We got to a queer-looking building of which I could not see much, for though my master had me firmly clutched in his hand, he just opened his fingers to give a glance at me, when his friend whispered, 'Fred, here comes the bride.'

I scarcely recognized her at first as the young lady who had tried me on her finger. She was dressed all in white, with a grand veil reaching down to her feet, and such a lovely bouquet of flowers in her hand. There were several beautifully dressed lady friends with her as she came up the church leaning on her father's arm. The building was packed with people, who were chatting about it being such a fine day.

Soon the important time came for me to join in the ceremony. How Fred trembled as he tried to put me on: it seemed as if it must have been a mistake to think I had fitted so nicely before. But it was only Fred's nervousness, and at last there I was reposing on such a dainty, lovely finger, a little cold perhaps, but so soft and nice.

Then these two were made man and wife. Now I felt it was worth while undergoing the heating and hammering and boiling that had taken place; for it was only through those processes that I was fit for the proud position that I now occupied. The bride and bridegroom, as I found they were called, entered a carriage and were driven to the house of the bride's family, where soon the rooms were crowded. While they had breakfast there was such laughing and chatting, joking and teasing, eating and drinking, that the place seemed all alive with noise and bustle. Then, every now and then, there was a pop! pop! popping, and I heard Fred's friend say, 'Now for the fun!' When all their glasses were filled ready, the best man (as he was called) stood up and proposed 'The health and wealth of the bride and bridegroom; wishing them every happiness.' Then there was a cheer, and everyone drank from their glasses; some called it 'the fizz,' and others 'the cham.'

When the breakfast was over the bride went upstairs to put on her travelling dress; for we were off on a journey to the seaside. As we went into the carriage the guests wished them a happy honeymoon. What a pleasant time they had while on their holiday! How often Fred said he loved Alice I cannot tell, but I do know that she never seemed tired of hearing him say it.

After the honeymoon they returned to town and had such a pleasant home in Kensington. Many friends called to see the happy couple, and there were frequent dinner parties, and from my position on the lady's dear little hand I could see and hear all that went on.

It was a year and three months after their marriage when their first baby arrived, and what a dear little girlie she was. How proud they were of her. When she was a year old they had quite a large party of friends to dinner. Again there was the eating, drinking, laughing and chatting. There was also the pop! popping of the 'fizz,' and some of the guests who had been drinking became excited and noisy. They had drunk so much that they seemed to forget their manners, and lost control over their tongues, for they could not speak plainly.

Every now and then my mistress looked very appealingly at Fred, for he was becoming the noisiest and most excited of the party;

but it was of no use. After the visitors had gone home she sat down and had a good cry, for Fred was lying on the couch snoring loudly, while she felt so tired with the noise and excitement of the evening, and the disappointment in her husband's conduct, that she was quite unable to help him upstairs, and she had to cover him with rugs and leave him there.

In the morning when she came downstairs, Fred sat on the couch holding his head in his hands and groaning dismally.

'Oh, Fred,' said Alice, 'how bad you look. Yes, and I feel bad,' was the reply. 'How I shall get on at the office to-day I do not know,' he added. His wife made him drink a cup of hot, strong tea, and that seemed to pull him together a bit. He could not eat any breakfast, and started for business looking and feeling most wretched. My mistress was very sad and thoughtful all through the day, even the charming coos and smiles of baby could not altogether drive away the sadness, and every now and then as she looked down on me she murmured, 'What shall I do if Fred becomes a drunkard?'

(To be continued.)

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