



Sketches.

TEMPERANCE AND SOCIOLOGY.

A Pugilist turned Preacher and what came of it.

The rapidly gathering crowd fell back as Jenkins so suddenly turned upon them, and, even the half-drunken three who were bent upon giving the returned fighter full pay for the past, were staggered and somewhat nonplussed at the turn things had taken. They evidently thought that the man who had come to preach would clear out, and they would have something of which to boast.

"You are not going to beat me till you hear what I have to say for myself," said our friend; "if you will only listen to what I have to tell you, I think you will forgive all that is past, and we shall be good friends." He had reached this point in his impromptu address when the rowdies, seeing he was ready to make peace, began to utter threats, and to pour maledictions upon his head, then, with a yell, as if possessed by demons, they, as one man, made a rush at the speaker, one of them armed with a heavy club. What might have been the termination of the battle it is hard to say, had not an event occurred which turned the whole matter to a very happy conclusion.

The three men had not covered half the space that lay between where they stood and where they expected to fall upon their man, when there was heard a loud, long, growl, which was half smothered in the throat of the creature that gave it utterance, and in an instant a huge animal bounded through the crowd, struggling to get free from a chain which was in the hand of a young woman, who, with all her strength was trying to restrain the raging animal. But it was evident, at a glance, she had lost control, and the great beast was swinging her after him at will.

He struck the foremost man fair in the chest, and, but for the weight of the woman on the steel chain, his great white teeth would have fastened themselves in his throat, and the results would have been fearful to contemplate. As it was he fell backwards and in the fall carried the other two with him, so that the three were piled in a struggling heap on the street.

Lottie Wilson had, years ago, received a present of an ugly puppy from a New York millionaire, who had spent a few days at the home of the Dewires while hunting in the forest, and he felt that the little granddaughter, who was so fond of wandering in the woods alone, needed such a companion as he hoped this dog would make. Lottie had trained the dog faithfully, until he had become her most obedient servant, and he had grown to be one of the greatest of the Great Danes, whose sires had hunted the wild boars in the forests of Russia in the ages long ago.

The great dog went with his young mistress in her walks in the forest, for there was not a beast that was the

equal of "Dangerfield," as he was called. Miss Lottie had, that evening, come out to the post office for the paper, and in turning the corner she came upon the crowd gathered to witness the battle of the giants. In the few days that James Jenkins had spent at the home of the Dewires the dog and he had become the best of friends, and when the creature saw the three men making a rush at his new found friend he decided to take a hand, or more correctly speaking, a tooth in the fray.

The three fallen men did not wait to see what had struck them, but, on all fours, and with shouts of "keep him off!" "keep him off!" they disappeared into the door of the hotel near by, not to appear again that night.

The strong hand of Jenkins was in a moment on the iron collar of the infuriated Dangerfield, and in a short time Miss Wilson had quieted his rage.

James Jenkins thought it a good time to open the work for which he had come so far, and turning to the waiting crowd he said: "This is a pretty warm reception you are giving an old shantymen, but I remember when I was here before, I made it both hot and blue, and if I had come back the same kind of a man as in the past you might have good reason to drive me out; but I am a changed man, and I am here to tell you all what great things the Lord has done for my soul, and, if you have no objections, we might hold a service now on the very spot where I fought several times?"

The young man did not wait for an expression from the company, but, producing his hymn book, read Charles

Wesley's grand invitation hymn:

"Come sinners to the gospel feast,
Let every soul be Jesus' guest;
Ye need not one be left behind,
For God hath bidden all mankind."

He had scarcely finished reading the last line of the first verse, when a voice, clear as a silver bell, caught the tune and sang with a pleading pathos which fell like a spell upon the company; and before the last line of the stanza was reached, a dozen voices were added and the solo became a chorus.

Then came the second verse, which seemed to be a proclamation of the young man's call to the preaching of the Gospel; but this end was read in a voice which was tremulous with emotion.

"Sent by my Lord on you I call,

"The invitation is to All!"

This time the chorus was larger, and the singing more pronounced, as the heavy voices of the rough men followed that of the young girl, who led faithfully to the end. Jenkins was almost overpowered, and he fell upon his knees and poured forth a prayer to God for himself in the work to which he had been called. It was a prayer which might have run foul of the refined tastes of those used to preachers of education, but it was well in keeping with the circumstance of the man who offered it. The full tide of his emotions was poured forth upon the evening air like the falling of great waters, and all the people of the little hamlet knew that something unusual was being enacted in their midst. Most of the people present stood and looked on, but some knelt with bowed heads, and once or twice there was heard a suppressed "praise the Lord," and "Hal-le-lu-jah" and "Glory to God," all of which was like oil upon a flame to the man who led the prayer.

Prayer over, the preacher read the story of the return of the prodigal son to the home of his father, and then told them the story of his own prodigality and return to the Father who gave his Son to die for him.

Just to Hand.



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