



'When Did I Make the First False Move?'

'Checkmate, isn't it, Johnny?' and little Willie looked up at his brother with a smile of triumph.

'That is so; and I've lost the game,' said the brother, looking dolefully at the few chessmen still remaining on the board. It had been a well contested game, although, to the father, who had been watching, the defeat of the elder brother had been for some time a foregone conclusion.

'You need not look so doleful about it, my son,' laughed the father. 'Accept your defeat cheerfully, in the hope of doing better next time.'

'That's all right, dad. I've been defeated fair and square; but then, I ought to have won, because, as you know, I am a much stronger player than Will. When did I make the first false move, I wonder?'

'Ah! a very pertinent question to ask, Johnny, and one that every chess player should endeavor to get answered. I believe I can point out where you first went wrong.'

'How was it, dad? Do say.'

'It was early in the game, your fourth move, I think, it was. There was nothing glaringly wrong about it, simply a weak move, but one that led you into difficulties you were not strong enough to surmount.'

'I see now that I was wrong,' said Johnny.

'Then in your next game you will not be so likely to repeat it. In every lost game the losing player first went wrong somewhere, and in watching others play it is of vast importance that we should be able to point out when the first false move was made. This is one of the many valuable lessons which chess teaches us, and which I trust you boys will learn and put in practice. We may be quite sure that every moral failure in life had a false move. Whenever in any case you see the game closed and poor weak man checkmated by the devil you may wisely remember that there must have been a moment when the losing player first went wrong.'

'I wonder when poor Dr. B— first went wrong,' said Johnny thoughtfully, 'I saw him to-day as I was coming from school, and he was so drunk that a policeman had as much as ever he could do to hold him up. It was dreadful to see him, papa.'

'Poor Dr. B—!' exclaimed the father. 'Drunk and drugs have done their work, and now he is nothing but a miserable wreck of a man, utterly ruined physically, socially, and morally. I don't suppose he has a patient in the town, and all his friends and relatives have discarded him. If he called upon either of them it would be unsafe to leave him in a room by himself, for he would steal anything he could put his hands upon and pawn it in order to obtain drink and morphia. No one sinks suddenly into the depths he has reached. There was a first wrong move, and I think I could tell you when it was made.'

'Do tell us, papa,' exclaimed both boys.

'We were at school together, though not classmates, he being some three or four years my junior. I remember him well, innocent-looking and generous hearted, as any in the school, full of fun but without thought of wrong-doing. He, however, came under

the influence of a bad set of boys, who made use of him as a tool. It was not long after grocers began to sell wines and spirits, and attracted by the novelty of sherry at fifteen pence a bottle, these boys used to club together their pocket-money and obtain it from one of Gilbey's agents. They generally drank it in the dormitory after bedtime. Of course, to obtain this wine was comparatively easy; no one supposed a boy would be going to a grocer's shop for any wrong purpose, but none could have gone to a public-house or a wine merchant's without certain discovery. The boy was sent after this sherry, sometimes in the day, but not seldom at night, when all were supposed to be in bed. He joined the others in drinking the stuff, and soon came to like it. That, I believe, was the first wrong move, which has led to defeat and utter ruin.'

'But the other fellows were worse than he was, papa. What became of them?' asked Johnny.

'I don't think any of them have so utterly collapsed as the doctor. They were stronger lads than he, made of much harder material. At the same time, I much question if either has come to any good. As boys they were certainly much worse than the doctor, though he has been the greatest sufferer.'

'That woman mamma goes to see sometimes—when did she make the first false move? Mamma says that she was at one time quite a lady.'

'Ah, yes! Poor Miss C—. I fear that will turn out to be another miserable defeat. She has made so many false moves one after the other, that all hope of recovery seems well nigh gone.'

'But when did she first go wrong, papa?' asked Willie.

'As far as I know, it was at a yeomanry ball given at the Assembly Rooms, many years ago. It appears she disgraced herself through taking too much wine, and never seemed able to hold up her head again. I have heard her speak of it with bitter self-reproaches.'

'It seems that most people go wrong at first through drink,' said Willie.

'Well, it wasn't through drink I made the first wrong move just now that lost me the game,' said Johnny.

'That will remind you, boys, that a teetotaler may make a wrong move, and if he does he will risk losing the game. Every wrong move has its consequences, which cannot be ignored.'

'But,' said Johnny, 'a player may recover himself and come out the winner notwithstanding.'

'That is so; but he cannot recall the wrong move. Once made it is irrevocable. A wrong move in chess is never excused and never forgiven. The player may recover himself through subsequent care and skill, but he must take the consequences of a wrong move, which, to say the least of it, will be a harder game to play.'

'Is it so in—in life, papa?' seriously asked Johnny.

'It is, my boy,' replied the father. 'A wrong move in life can never be called back. The laws of life are as hard and unforgiving as the laws of chess. There is nothing unfair about that, is there?'

'Well, not in chess. It would never do to allow a player to call back a move once made.'

'It is just the same in life, my son. There is nothing unfair in the laws of life.'

'What is to be done, then, papa?' said the boy, as the hardness of life seemed to come home to him.

'There is only one safe course for any of us, and that is to do right from the start, and to keep on doing it.'

'How about those who have made wrong moves, papa?'

'They must take the consequences, my son.'

'Dear mamma says there is forgiveness with God,' whispered little Willie.

'Your mamma is one of God's gentle evangelists, dear boys, and what she has told you is the great comfort and strength, and hope of our lives, amid the mistakes and many wrong moves we have made.—'Temperance Record.'

A Slumbering Demon Aroused

The following startling account appears in an English journal: A man, who had been a drunkard for many years was induced to sign a pledge of total abstinence, which he kept inviolate through all temptation. At length, while superintending some repairs on a hotel, the landlord offered him a glass of beer. This he declined. He was urged to drink, but still he refused. Continued urging only made his refusal still more peremptory, while he claimed the right to do as he pleased. But for some reason the landlord chose to tempt him further, and watching for an opportunity, tipped the glass so that some drops of beer fell on his lips. This taste was sufficient to arouse the demon of appetite that had so long slumbered. The glass was seized and drained of its contents with an eagerness that startled all who witnessed it. Work was abandoned directly, and a family which had rejoiced over the rescue of a husband and a father from a fate worse than death, were prostrated with grief. Many efforts were afterward made to reclaim him, and often did he promise never again to touch the destroying drink, but these promises were quickly broken. He had lost all power of self-control. He lived to become a miserable vagabond, wandering from place to place, wretched and despairing, dying at last in a public almshouse, all because of a glass of beer.

It Prevents Growth.

Professor J. W. Seaver, M.D., of Yale University, in a recent article states that data gathered by him among the students show that students who use tobacco do not grow in height, weight, chest measure or lung capacity, as do non-users. He also states that when the highest possible working ability is demanded among the students tobacco is one of the first things forbidden. If these results are apparent among highly favored college students how much greater must be the harm among those, who, by inheritance, training and surroundings are less fortified.

Tobacco strikes even deeper than the marrow of the bones. It assails the moral nature, especially of the young. It deadens the sensibilities and weakens the will. It dulls the intellect and dwarfs the body. It creates morbid appetites, and at all times tends towards that which is evil at the expense of the good. Unless the tobacco habit is checked, especially among boys and young men, the inevitable result, I believe, will be physical and moral impairment and a marked degeneracy of the race.—Joseph A. Conwell.

An English woman estimated that if all Englishmen would deny themselves of only one-tenth the alcohol they now waste their money upon, she would be able with the proceeds to send out 45,000 new missionaries, giving each a salary of \$1,500.—'Golden Rule.'