



A Drunkard's Brain

The Terrible Result of an Appetite for Alcohol.

'I was present at the autopsy of a noted old "rounder" of my town a few weeks ago,' said a resident of Troy, N.Y., recently, 'and I was startled and shocked at what I saw. The dead man was about sixty years of age, and had been the town drunk for forty years. The doctors had surmised that when they cut his head open a pronounced smell of alcohol would issue from the skull.

'I thought it only one of those grim jokes that Aesculapians indulge in sometimes when they are carving a fellowman to mince meat in the interest of their science. But I soon learned that it was no joke, for when the surgeon's saw had cut off the top of the man's skull the odor of the alcohol that filled the room was strong enough to almost sicken one. Then one of the surgeon's struck a match and held it close to the brain. Immediately a blue flame enveloped the entire portion of the cerebral organ exposed, and the quivering flesh sizzled as if on a gridiron.

'That experiment and disclosure set me to very serious thinking about the error of my way. I am not a temperance lecturer nor a prohibition politician, but I must most respectfully and firmly decline your invitation to have something. I don't want my brain to float around in a sea of alcohol, as did that of the poor old town drunkard of Troy. There is no telling how many other men's brains will reveal the same condition if an autopsy is held upon them.—St. Louis 'Globe-Democrat.'

Looking at the Facts.

Mr. J. A. Steuart, the novelist, to whom we are indebted for some searching pictures of social life, speaking to a congregation in Dundee, said some of the plainest things his audience ever heard upon the Church and drink traffic. He declared, and we fully agree with him, that despite all our efforts in temperance work, the Church is not yet awake to the 'insidious, subtle, all-pervading influence of the drink traffic.' One suggestion he made we should like to see carried out, i.e., that Christian people should go and see for themselves how men and women, made in the likeness and image of God, and meant to minister to His glory, are preparing for the gaol, the penitentiary, and the gallows. The awful facts of drink are known to the majority at second or third hand only, and so their frightfulness is largely unrealized. We cannot conceive how any person could remain even moderately moved over the matter, if once he beheld with his eyes the horrors involved.—The 'Christian.'

The Testimony of a Drunkard.

In 'L'Etoile du Matin' we read of a young man having gone up to the bar of a tavern and asked for a glass of gin. The tavern-keeper answered him, 'No, you have already had enough.' Almost at the same time two beardless youths entered and called for glasses, and were served. When they had left, the drunkard said: 'Scarcely six years ago I was as young as these two youths. I was the joy of my parents, who anticipated for me a brilliant future. I was intelligent and virtuous. But I fell into the hands of evil companions and learned to drink, and became what I now am, a drunkard. My mother died recently of vexation at my condition, and my good and brave wife has quitted her brutish husband and returned to her parents. Why refuse me at this moment a part of my daily rations? Pour out for me boldly the cursed liquor, for you cannot injure me farther; my health, my intellectual faculties, my will, my fortune, my happiness, are all swallowed up

in the drink; but hear my prayer: Do not serve more gin to these young men who have gone out, lest you be the cause of their perdition. I am lost, irrevocably lost, but these may yet be saved. For the love of God do not pour out for them any more liquor.'

The tavern-keeper presented a glass to the wretched man, who swallowed the cursed drink as a veritable dipsomaniac, and quitted the tavern, after shaking hands with the tavern-keeper, as if to accentuate still more his confession and his prayer. And the tavern-keeper put back the vessel from which he had poured out the liquor, saying, 'If the good God is merciful to me, I will henceforth gain my crust of bread in some other way than that of selling misery and company.' And he kept his word.—'Temperance Record.'

After Many Days.

'I should like to tell you an incident,' said a friend who called a few days ago, 'because I think it will interest you.'

'Please do,' I said heartily, 'especially if I may tell it again.'

'I was coming away from one of the special meetings for the deepening of spiritual life, and feeling rather sad because my own faith and service were so far below what I wished, when something happened to fill me with thankfulness and joy. As I was entering my house a policeman came to me with a letter which he said had been sent from America by a young man whom he used to know in our village.

'He had heard,' said the policeman, 'that you had left the village, and as he did not know your address in the town he commissioned me to find you, and give you this letter. Perhaps you remember John —? It is from him.'

'I remembered him very well,' continued my friend; 'he was a lad in our Sunday School and had caused us a good deal of anxiety. There was a time when no one could tell whether the public-house or the church would secure him. He was too much with companions who would have led him in the wrong direction, but we wanted him for something better; he was a nice lad, it seemed a great pity that he should not decide for Christ and give up the drink and evil ways. We knew he loved the little chapel, and there were some good men there then to influence him, and especially an effort was made to get him to sign the pledge. After a time we heard that he had emigrated. Well, my letter was from him. He married and settled down in Calamfoo, Michigan, and is very prosperous; and he wrote—to thank me for a few words I spoke to him more than twenty-four years ago.'

'Oh, how beautiful!' I exclaimed. 'How lovely for you! I am so glad.'

'Yes,' said my friend, who always wears the beautiful grace of humility; 'it is wonderful that I ever did anything for which I should be thanked after twenty-four years. Would you like to see the letter?'

I said that I would, very much indeed.

It was a letter to make one glad and proud, written in an excellent handwriting, and in sentences that were very forcible. 'You will be surprised to receive a letter from me, as I have never written to you before during the whole twenty-four years we have been in this country; for it was twenty-four years the last day of March since we landed at Boston, and a few days later at this beautiful city which we have called home all those years. Now, as to my reasons for writing to you, I have been asking the Lord about it, and I could not seem to get you out of my mind, so I decided to write to you this morning, after we prayed at our family altar. Again, in Sunday school, in reviewing the "Temperance Lesson" I was led to tell some of my experiences when I started in the true service. We had sung the hymn "Yield not to temptation," and I told of the time when I was saved from the public-house and the drink habit, and how I promised the Lord never to enter a public-house again. He helped me to keep that vow. I told at the meeting of the encouragement I received from a lady, who, one Sunday morning, as I was leaving the little Baptist church, took my hand in the vestibule, and with a look of kindness said to me, "John, I am so glad you have tak-

en the right course,' I cannot remember the exact words, but it was the spirit and kindly manner. I cannot tell you what encouragement it gave me, and how glad I felt that someone cared enough for me to speak a kindly word to me, who felt himself so fallen and wicked. That lady was yourself, my dear lady. You, perhaps, do not remember, but the memory of that act has been a comfort to me, and has helped me to endure strong temptations, and not to go back to sin when I feared that I might fall, and be overcome by the enemy. So, after all these years, I thank you for those kindly words, which, at the turning point of my life, did so much for me. God bless you and yours. I pray God may make you a blessing to others—to the poor and the fallen; that your last days may be your best days in usefulness in the Lord's vineyard; and that you may have the experience as written in the blessed words, "The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Is not this a letter to make glad the heart of a Christian woman? After many years the seed that was sown half unconsciously is found to have brought a beautiful and plentiful harvest. 'It was such a little thing,' she says, 'nothing; just an ordinary word spoken in a casual way. I feel that I do not deserve such a blessing.'

Ah, but it was not an ordinary word; it was, I know, accompanied by a smile and a look from the kindest eyes; and it was not spoken in a casual way, for some women live lives of prayer, and whether they know it or not, are always pleading for others. My friend is to be congratulated because she has heard what that word, probably long ago forgotten, meant to another. Almost certainly John was not the only young man to whom she spoke in the vestibule of the village chapel; but she will keep this testimony among her treasures, and one of her children will take care of it afterward, for it will be a reminder of what sort of a woman their mother was. But it is an illustration of the truth expressed in the Proverbs, 'A word spoken in season, how good it is.' . . . 'A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.' There are, and let us be thankful for it, some women in every church who know how and when to speak. If John had been scolded or lectured it is possible that the fight for his soul might have gone the other way. 'This is woman's ministry. Who can tell how many youths there are just waiting for the kindly word, the gentle touch, the look of love that tells of affectionate interest and regard which would mark the turning point in their lives? It is such young men as John who have gone out to our colonies from the village chapels of England who are making a future of old-fashioned piety and true success.—'Christian World.'

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