

were resting in their cribs, and some had fallen asleep and were dreaming of a "home," perhaps, deservedly dear, for, thank God, all poor Irish homes are not like Nellie Murphy's. It was not till an hour or two later, when lamps had been lighted, and supper time arrived, that Nellie's old companions discovered that their favorite fellow patient had come back again amongst them. But why was she lying so quiet? Why did she sleep so soundly? It was only the other day she went away and she could not have grown very sick since then. Ah, she was only pretending, and would put up her head and laugh at them in a minute! Two of the nuns had been bending over, trying to wake her, of course, and they had gone to the next ward. How lazy Nellie had grown!

"We'll sing the Wearing of the Green," said the children, "and if anything will waken her that will."

The "Wearing of the Green" was sung with a shrill chorus, one verse, two verses; but still Nellie's head lay motionless and stiff upon the pillow, and by neither look nor movement did she notice her favorite song. Then the Sisters came in and hushed the disappointed singers. Nellie was very ill. Nellie had met with an accident. The doctor was coming, and perhaps he would make her well.

All that night and all next day, Nellie lay there stiff and stark, the blood oozing from her ears, the pulse faintly beating. No efforts of doctors or nurses would ever open again those sealed eyes. At last the pulse stopped beating, and Nellie was dead.

"How did you say it happened?" asked the doctor, laying down the small marble hand on the coverlet, with a shake of the head that announced all was over.

"Drunk!" said the ward-maid indignantly. "The neighbors who brought her here told me the story. The father, a great strong brute, aimed a blow at the mother; the child threw herself between them, and caught the blow on her head. That's the way it happened, doctor."

"A very common case, I'm sorry to confess," said the doctor, turning away.

And now the last scene of the tragedy. Nellie was lying in the sanctuary of the nun's chapel, under the light of the holy lamp, safe at last from cruel blows, from wicked example, from all the evils that lay in wait for her on her parents' black hearthstone. She was dressed in a little white gown that typified her innocence, and one white blossom was folded in her waxen hands—herself a broken flower, gathered for heaven before Satan had time to trample its purity in the dust. It was very late: Sisters and ward maids were locking up for the night, when a dull, single knock at the door startled them, followed by a waiting murmur through the keyhole.

"Lord have mercy on us, ma'am!" said Bridget, after listening some moments with her ear to the lock, "it's Anne Murphy, the mother."

"Too late to let anyone in, Bridget." "She wants just one look at her child, ma'am. God knows what way she'll be in the morning."

The Sister reflected for a moment, and then opened the door herself, and admitted a gaunt, crouching creature, that came creeping into the hall like a whipped animal. Yes, it was Anne Murphy, thinner and more haggard, dirtier and more ragged, than even herself of a couple of months ago. A hateful odor of drink entered the hall with her, and tainted the pure air of the peaceful house. The nun signed to her to follow, and, leading the way to the quiet chapel, stood back to allow her to enter. But one look from the doorway was enough for the wretched mother. With a glance she took in the small, still face on which the sanctuary light shone—the folded hands, the white garb that seemed to fit this little creature for the company of the angels; and the woman fell flat on her face and grovelled on the threshold.

"My child! I killed my child!" the Sister heard her stammer. "Murdered for me—murdered by her father!"

Then she rose up, swinging her arms frantically over her head; and, with a cry of despair, which those who heard it can never forget, fled away through the hall door into the outer darkness.—*League of the Cross Magazine.*

QUEEN VICTORIA AND THE TEMPERANCE CAUSE.

Although not an abstainer, Queen Victoria was most abstemious in her use of alcoholic liquors; and that she was in hearty sympathy with Temperance and social reform there is no doubt.

The young Queen had barely attained the majority of eighteen years of age fixed by Act of Parliament when William IV. died, and it is not probable that she had heard much, if anything, of the Temperance societies, which had been carrying on an active and salutary work for seven and a half years. It is evidence, however, of her early leaning to movements for the elevation and welfare of the nation, that she consented a few months later to become the patron of the British and Foreign Temperance Society, of which Dr. C. J. Blomfield, Bishop of London was president. That society, founded in 1831, proceeded on the lines of the first Temperance societies in America and this country, requiring from its members abstinence from "ardent spirits as beverages, coupled with a promise to discountenance the causes and practice of intemperance.

In the first year of her reign, the young Queen graciously acknowledged from St. James' Palace, the acceptance of four volumes of "Temperance Tales," which were forwarded to her by an American prohibitionist. Ten years later, Her Majesty expressed, through Lord John Russell, her approbation of the exertions of Father Matthew in combating the intemperance which, in so many instances, obscured and rendered fruitless the victories of your countrymen.

The Queen's association with the Temperance Reformation was maintained up till the close of her long and illustrious reign. To the Rev. Basil Wilberforce (now chaplain to the House of Commons), Sir T. Biddulph wrote on behalf of the revered sovereign in 1875:—"It is impossible for the Queen not to be grateful to those who endeavor to mitigate an evil of such magnitude as the widely-spread intemperance which unfortunately prevails."

Later in the same year, Victoria's name appeared among the patrons of the Church of England Temperance Society, and she sent a letter to Canon Ellison, saying it was Her Majesty's most earnest wish that the efforts being made against intemperance would be crowned with success.

A more recent indication of the Queen's deep interest in social reform was her confirmation of the settlement of the case of King Khama and his fellow chiefs, and approval of the provisions excluding strong drink from their country. "I feel strongly," she said to the chiefs at Windsor in 1895, "in this matter, and am glad to see that the chiefs have determined to keep so great a curse from the people."

In the year of her Diamond Jubilee, too, Queen Victoria showed her kindly regard for the welfare of the children by becoming a patron of the United Kingdom Band of Hope Union.

Royal approval was also given to the cause in the army and navy. Miss Weston, who has labored devotedly and long in this work, had the honor of an interview with Her Majesty, at Windsor, and her visit was amply noticed in the "Court Circular."

Hence it is that every section of the Temperance movement truly and sincerely mourns the passing of Queen Victoria, and every society, lodge and tent, in the British Empire has joined in the chorus of panegyric.

—*Scottish Reformer.*

PARLIAMENTARY ACTION.

Mr. W. S. Caine, who is now leader of the temperance party in the British House of Commons, has prepared a bill embodying some reform proposals. It is expected that he will also endeavor to secure a division upon an amendment to the address in reply to the King's speech in which will be set out the desirability of some measure of temperance reform, hoping to secure some expression of opinion on this important question.

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