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THE HISTORY AND CONFESSION OF A REFORMED DRUNKARD.

In the spring of 1820, there came to the village of M., in the state of Massachusetts, a man whom I shall designate as William Carleton. He was just at his majority, and had fixed on M. as an eligible place for prosecuting the business of his calling—that of a house carpenter.

He was a noble looking man, and something above the medium height, stout built, and possessing a countenance, such as a sculptor would not disdain to look upon. His education was much above the common standard, and his manners those of a well-bred man. In his intercourse with others there was an open, hearty frankness, which made him no less accessible than acceptable to all with whom he came in contact. Carleton was, besides, an excellent mechanic thoroughly versed in all the mysteries of his calling, and endowed with a power of despatch never before witnessed among the people of his adopted village. If he laid by less of his earnings than others in a similar walk of life; if the fruits of his labours were not always cared for, it was because he was more generous, or less penurious than others—it was because he sought money rather as a *means* than as an *end*. Still, Carleton was a thriving man, and the resources of future usefulness and support gradually accumulated on his hands.

Three years later than the date here given, I attended Carleton's wedding. He had engaged the affections of Caroline S—, the daughter, and only child of a respectable widowed lady of M. A finer looking, happier pair, I never saw before the hymenial altar. The bride scarcely nineteen, tastefully, yet not gaudily dressed, modest, yet not bashful, entered with a light, yet imposing step, gracefully hanging upon the arm of the stately young carpenter. There was health in her finely developed form, and there was gladness in her rich blue eyes. The happiness of the present, the pleasing anticipations of the future, beamed brightly in her countenance, and revealed the workings of a heart full of hope and devotion.

Carleton was not less an object of admiration. His open, manly brow, loaded with rich curls of dark hair; his full mellow eyes and elegantly turned mouth, stamped him at once as an excellent specimen of humanity, as from the hand of his Maker.

Two years later, and I was a guest at the house of Carleton. Caroline had become a mother—the mother of a beautiful boy. She was the picture of contentment. Her maiden smile still sat on her lips—her bright blue eyes had grown yet brighter still, and her step was light and buoyant as on the day of her wedding. Carleton was all life, health and activity. Happy in the bosom of his little family, respected by all, and full of hope, he gave a new impulse to all around him. His clear head made him a safe counsellor, and his ready wit, a brilliant companion. In a word he had become the master-spirit of M.

Five years rolled away, and I had not seen Carleton. In 1830, accident, once more threw me into the village of M. I there met Carleton, and a warm and hearty meeting

it was; yet he was not precisely the man I had parted with five years before. He was, I thought, less self-possessed, less energetic, and less guarded in his conversation. His humour seemed coarser, and in his manner there was a sort of dashing lightness, not exactly in keeping with his former character. His eyes, too, I thought, had lost something of their wonted brilliancy, and the colour in his face appeared deeper than at our last interview. Yet so many years had elapsed since our meeting, changes were to be expected, and besides, there was so much of the frank William Carleton still left, that my observations at the moment, resulted in no unwelcome suspicions. In the course of our short interview, old recollections were revived, old scenes rehearsed, and new subjects introduced. Carleton was so brilliant, so happy, and so much like his former self, that at the end of an hour I had quite forgotten the embryo impressions excited at the moment of greeting.

In the evening I was at his house. If my attention had been arrested, on meeting Carleton, by some undefinable alteration in his appearance, it was doubly so when Caroline or Mrs. Carleton made her appearance in the sitting room. She was cheerful, but her cheerfulness seemed rather forced than spontaneous. Her brow was slightly clouded, and her beautiful blue eyes appeared more fixed and cast down than formerly. She affected to be gay, but evidently it required an effort to be so. There was to, an appearance of marked submission, mingled with fear in her manner altogether unlike her wonted, hearty ebullitions of feeling. I thought I could perceive, also, that when her eyes met those of Carleton there was an appearance of something like shrinking, or restraint, as though there were certain bounds beyond which she dare not pass. All certainly was not right. I noticed again the unnatural flush on Carleton's face. It was now more apparent than at our meeting in the morning. A sudden conviction of the truth flashed across my mind. I did not embody the idea; I gave it no language, but there it was enthroned like a demon, and as ineffaceable as the impress of eternal truth—CARLETON WAS A DRUNKARD!

Of this terrible truth I obtained evidence enough on the following morning, I need not repeat it here. I left the village, and saw no more of him for several years; and when subsequently I did, he was a perfect wreck, both in person and fortune. Indeed, I never saw a more disgusting lump of humanity. Bloated, filthy and brutish, he had been at different times an inmate of the work-house, the jail, and house of correction, from all which he came forth seven-fold more a monster of depravity than when he entered either. Poor Caroline! she had drained the cup of wretchedness to the very dregs! She had been driven from her pleasant home—her furniture and wardrobe, piece after piece, had passed out of her possession, till at last she and her little boy were tenants of a miserable hovel in a remote corner of her native town. To their abode Carleton would at times find his way; and *there*, instead of meeting frowns and reproaches, instead of being repulsed and driven from the door, as an outcast and a scourge, she, who in the budding hour of womanhood had sworn fidelity and love before