

structive habit. He did not like to think so himself, and it mortified him for others to think so. "However," said he to him self, "it is no business of yours. I shall, therefore, do as I please."

Moses was occupying his usual quarters on the rail fence next morning when he again perceived the Squire approaching. His first impulse was to avoid him by going across the lot to the woods. His better nature, however, suggested the meanness of such a course, and he resolved to stand his ground.

"Friend Blauvelt," said the Squire, "I come to get you to sign the pledge—here it is; and I want you to make a speech at our meeting next Monday."

"Ha! ha! ha! Well Squire, you're a team, that's a fact. Sign pledges, make speeches, hoh! hoh! hoh! All right—I rather think I'll do it—over the left. Sorry I can't oblige you."

"I thought," said the Squire, "I would make you a proposition, and you can do as you choose in reference to it. You were telling me yesterday that you found it tight work to pay the landlord and storekeeper. Now I will tell you what I will do. I will make a bargain with you that if you will not drink any liquor for three months, I will be responsible for your expenses. At the end of that time, if you have not got twenty-five dollars over and above, come to me and I will make it good."

"Well, Squire," replied Moses, "I must say you are very kind; but really I don't like this idea of tying myself up."

To shorten our story: after a long conference, the proposition of the Squire was accepted to, "just by way of joke," as Moses observed. And now about the pledge.

"Our bargain is only for three months, Squire, and then I can back out honor bright, if I like. You will have to alter the pledge accordingly; so we will step in and get a pen and ink."

Huldah met her husband with a pleasant smile, and wiped a chair for the Squire.

"Wife," said Moses, "I am going to sign the temperance pledge—what do you think?"

Tears gushed into the wife's eyes, and looking first at one and then at the other, she dropped upon her knees, exclaiming, "Thank God, we will be happy yet. May the Lord give you grace to keep your resolution."

"Oh it's only for three months. You see the Squire here rather hunted me, and I thought I would take him up just for the fun of it," and he stated the proposal which Squire Smith had made.

But to pass on. The pledge for three months was signed and faithfully adhered to. The task was a most severe one, and opinions were divided among the neighbors about the probability of the new convert holding on. Bar-room excitement and speculation were rife. The fact of Moses Blauvelt signing the pledge was the all engrossing topic of the country for many miles round.

Every day the Squire called to speak a kind word of encouragement to his protégé; and after the first unpleasant and somewhat painful sensations incident upon the new condition into which he had entered, our friend exhibited an unwonted cheerfulness, and declared that his spirits were more buoyant, his appetite far better, his rest sweeter, and that he had in fact just begun to live.

Munday came round, and the Squire called as usual. He thought and said that a few days of rational living had wrought a wonderful change, not only in the man himself but on all around him.—He had formerly noticed that the fences and barn were a good deal out of repair; now they were presenting a comfortable appearance. The corn, potatoes, and the crops generally seemed to be coming on well. So much thought he for letting strong drink alone.

"Ah, Moses," remarked the Squire playfully, that speech; we shall want it to night. You will have to talk a little."

"Now, Squire, that's putting it on rather thick. I never made a speech of ten minutes in my life. Besides I am only a three months recruit, you know, so it can't amount to much."

"Never mind replied the Squire, "something you must say if it is only in justice to yourself, some of your friends will no doubt be there, and they will feel a curiosity to know what has induced you to take this step."

"Well, I suppose I can tell them about the bargain—and I can say, likewise, that so far, I feel all the better for it."

"That will be sufficient. I have no fear but what your good sense will direct you aright."

That was a great night—ono that has never yet been forgotten. Anticipating a very large attendance, the little meeting house, capable of seating three hundred, was procured in the

place of the Academy, and crowded it was to overflowing. The Squire presided, and after some pertinent remarks, prayer was offered by the pastor. Then came a song by several young ladies from a neighboring town, whose services had been obtained. Never did the sweet air of "Sparkling and Bright," fall more ravishingly upon the ears of a spell bound audience. All was novel, wonderful, delightful. In the altar sat Mr. Blauvelt, for such we now call him, in his right mind, although something dashed, from the consciousness of being the observed of all observers. A short address from a stranger followed; and then Squire Smith stated that neighbor Blauvelt would say a few words to the meeting.

He arose calmly and looking around for a moment remarked, "I am a new man, I served king Alcohol faithfully for twenty odd years, and now I have got only a three months furlough, but I mean to take this chance to desert the army." He then went on to relate the happy effects which had resulted from his adoption of the principles of entire abstinence. Those who listened to that warm, unstudied, out gushing of the full soul in a cause which Heaven and humanity combine to invest with loftiest, holiest interest, still live to remember the breathless attention—the deep and thrilling sensation with which that wondering auditory hung upon his words. Those words were like the gentle whispers of angelic voices coming over the dark and troubled waves of mortal error and destructive vice, and speaking not only pardon for the past, but shedding the light of hope, serene and confiding, over the dim vista of untrodden life. Yes; the man spoke out there—it was not books, not philosophy—but man, in the nobleness of his regeneration; and presenting by the side of theoretical truth a practical illustration of the dignity and happiness to which it is the province of man in the might of firm, unswerving resolution to attain.

That night was an era in the history of a people who, though simple and untaught, could appreciate and cherish the admonitions of plain and practical experience. Very few left the sacred enclosure without recording their vows of allegiance to the temperance pledge. So decided, at this day is the change, not so much in population as in character, that a visitor, after a lapse of a few years, would scarcely recognize in that quiet and orderly hamlet, the very spot where the demon of intemperance formerly held un molested sway.

We might almost as well omit any farther allusion to the bargain between the Squire and Moses Blauvelt; but will simply state that, at the expiration of his furlough, he existed for life, nor had he any occasion to call upon the Squire for the fulfilment of his part of the contract. An altered life brought with it altered circumstances and prospects, and plenty abounded where want seemed to have taken up her dwelling place. P. T. M.

### The Teetotal Pledge not Unscriptural nor in Vain.

(To the Editor of the National Temperance Chronicle.)

Sir,—The author of a volume of sermons lately published,\* after showing most conclusively that the life blood of gospel morality is the love of God shed abroad in the heart, that "a holy life is the spontaneous fruit of union with Christ," "without effort and without pride," writes thus,— "In old times, Orders of one kind or another, in our own days Associations, with vows or pledges, have attempted to bind themselves by a great effort to exhibit some one grace, which is in fact a very ordinary fruit of membership with Christ. All such works when sifted by the eye of God, will be found, I think, to be altogether of the earth, and have their reward on earth. They are not the natural fruits of the true vine. They are imitations only, hung on the branches, in the vain hope that they may grow and flourish there."—p. 143. Such is the view that this good and able man, for such I know him to be, takes of the Teetotal pledge, and yet how rash and unfounded is his condemnation! He does not indeed say, and no man can justly say, that we deny or set aside the great principle of gospel morality, for we know and acutely feel that without the sap of the true vine we can neither have leaves nor fruit that can abide the withering influence of this world's scorn, nor the deceitful lust of self-gratification. No, his

\* Sermons by the Rev. S. A. Pears, B. D. one of the Assistant Masters of Harrow School. 1851.