

TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE,

DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE & NEWS.

PLEDGE.—We, the undersigned, do agree, that we will not use intoxicating liquors as a Beverage, nor Traffic in them; that we will not provide them as an article of Entertainment, nor for persons in our Employment; and that in all suitable ways we will discountenance their use throughout the Community.

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The Bottle.—Chapter VIII.

Would that with the murder of one and the madness of another, the evil work of the bottle had ceased—that with its destruction its dread influence had come to an end. But, alas! it was not so. The grave and the madhouse received two victims; but their children yet lived, now homeless, friendless, and depraved.

When the mother's body was taken away in the cart, Agnes and her little brother went forth into the city, whose evil but strongly pulsating heart, pours its corrupting current through a thousand veins that are hidden from the public gaze, to sink deeper in vice and crime. There was no one to speak to them a word of good advice; no one to care whether they did wrong or right. The means of subsistence were in their own hands, and they went on for a time in their old vocation. Their resting place at night was upon a bundle of rags, or upon the hard floor, in some abode of vice, where their minds acquired a maturity in evil, that would have shamed their elders by many years. For a long time, growing worse and worse, sinking lower and lower, they went on, until they attracted the eyes of the Police, and were taken up and sent to the House of Refuge, where they remained for many years.

At the age of fifteen, Agnes was taken from the institution by a family some fifty miles from the city, who used every means in their power to make her useful and respectable; but the seeds of vice had been, alas! too thickly sown, and had felt too intensely, the influx of infernal light and heat. They had already begun to germinate. In less than a year, she ran off and made her way back to the city, where, by a change of name, she succeeded in successfully eluding the efforts of the Police for her arrest as a fugitive from the Refuge, and soon became more vile and wicked than she had ever been.

James, before he was apprenticed, heard that Agnes had left her place. Rightly conjecturing that she had gone back to their old haunts, and eager to join her, he waited only until his turn came to be put out, to do as she had done.

Seven years had passed since the lad walked the streets of that great city. Then he was but a child—now he was a stout boy. Until he found himself alone, and without money in his pocket in the heart of a now strange place, he had scarcely asked himself what he would do, or what his real purpose was in throwing himself upon its troubled and dangerous waters. As he passed along, old localities brought back to his mind the thoughts of former times, and of some incidents that he would rather have forgotten than remembered; and, hardened as he was, and full of impulses to wrong, he felt that there was misery in evil courses, and he more than half repented the unwise step he had taken, in running away from a comfortable and virtuous home.

While passing, thus, slowly and thoughtfully along, he

met a gaily dressed young girl, and before he recognized her changed face and appearance, was startled by her familiar voice and the words—

“Why, Jimmy! What are you doing here?”

It was Agnes. But, in her gay attire, and more womanly appearance, the sister of the lad no longer appeared. It was Agnes; and yet not to him the Agnes of old—the sister he had loved for her tenderness to him in the sad and evil days of their unhappy childhood. He took her hand and grasped it tightly—but it did not feel like the hand of his sister.

Agnes saw what he felt, and comprehended all that was in his mind; and the regrets of that moment were the most painful she had ever felt since her wide and almost hopeless departure from virtue.

Had it been otherwise with her than it was, she might have again united her fortunes with those of her brother, and in the bond of fraternal affection helped each other to do right and be happy. But this was hopeless now—and bitterly did she feel that it was so.

For hours they walked the streets together, and talked of the past, and ~~made some, but few, allusions to the future.~~ When James asked his sister where she lived, she refused to tell him.

“It is better that you should not know,” she said, and her voice was sad as she spoke. He understood her, and de-
prayed as his own heart was, it felt cold and shuddered.

On making inquiry about their father, James learned that he still lived, and was still an inmate of the mad house.—He proposed that they should visit him. Agnes at first declined, but when she found that he meant to go, she changed her mind and accompanied him.

They found an old man, shivering by the fire, and shrinking as from some object of horror. There was little about him that reminded them of their father. They did not linger long upon an object so painful to behold. When they left his gloomy cell, there were no motions of affection in their hearts; but a bitter remembrance of that never-to-be forgotten night when his hand imbrued itself in their mother's blood.

As they turned from the cell, they saw crouching upon the ground beneath a grated window, an old man, with terror-staring eyes. The lad paused a moment to look at him, and then said to the keeper,—

“Isn't that old Morrison who sold rum at the ‘Man and Monkey?’”

The keeper nodded assent, and they passed on. It was nearly night when they parted. Agnes gave her brother some money, and promised to see him at a certain place on the next day; but they never met again. A horrible murder was committed that night in a house of ill-repute, and Agnes was the victim!

Verily, the bottle has done its work!