

Frederick Charlston continued to step into a saloon occasionally to pass an evening with his comrades. Every expedient was tried to persuade him to taste with them; but with a manly spirit of independence he remained for several weeks invincible to their attacks. At length he was induced to take a tumbler with hot water, sweetened with sugar, and flavored with nutmeg and peppermint. But Jenkins one night gave the innkeeper a wink to put a few drops of Scotch whiskey into Fred's tumbler. A few drops were sufficient to slightly stimulate his brain, and produce a flow of social feeling within his heart; and thus, when too late, he discovered that he had tasted of the evil spirit. Having once tasted, he felt a less restriction of duty; and on subsequent occasions allowed a few drops to be added to the mixture. *Only a few drops!* how insignificant in number! how innocent they appear within themselves! But, alas, a few drops were added to the few, until they became *a great number*; and before winter had thrown off its fleecy covering, Frederick Charlston could empty a tumbler of hot punch as readily as any of his comrades. Thus, he who had once nobly defended the cause of Temperance, and had remained so long invincible, at length dishonored that pledge which, even under the most trying circumstances, he had hitherto never violated. "*Only a few drops*" at first—yes, *only a few drops*,