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THE OLD MAN'S STORY.

A THRILLING SKETCH.



NEVER shall I forget the commencement of the temperance reform. I was a child at the time, of some ten years of age. Our home had every comfort,

and my parents idolized me their child. Wine was often on the table, and both my father and mother frequently gave it to me in the bottom of the glass.

One Sunday, at church, a startling announcement was made to our people. I knew nothing of its purport, but there was much whispering among the men. The pastor said that on the next evening there would be a meeting, and an address upon the evils of intemperance in the use of alcoholic drinks. He expressed himself ignorant of the object of the meeting, and could not say what course it would be best to pursue in the matter.

The subject of the meeting came at our table after the service, and I questioned my father about

it with all the curious eagerness of a child. The whispers and words which had been dropped in my hearing, clothed the whole affair with a great mystery to me, and I was all eagerness to learn the strange thing.

My father merely said it was some scheme to unite church and state.

The night came and groups of people gathered on the tavern steps, and I heard the jest and the laugh, and saw drunken men reeling out of the bar-room. I urged my father to let me go, but he first refused. Finally thinking that it would be an innocent gratification of my curiosity, he put on his hat and we passed across the green to the church. I remember how well the people appeared as they came in, seeming to wonder what kind of an exhibition was to come off.

In the corner was the tavern-keeper, and around him a number of friends.

For an hour the people of the place continued to come in, until there was a fair house full. All were curiously watching at the door, wondering what would appear next. The pastor stole in and took a seat behind a pillar under the gallery, as if doubtful of the