

Tales and Sketches.

A TERRIBLE END.

Richard Worthington was a mechanic in the town of Northfield. He had labored industriously and lived economically, and in consequence he was in comfortable circumstances. At the age of twenty-five he had won the love of an estimable girl, Julia Warren, and they were married.

For five years they lived happily, and no shadows seemed to darken their pathway. They had two children, Alice and Harry, whom they loved dearly. Their young lives had been carefully trained and guarded, and they were growing up a pride and blessing to their parents.

But a change came. The demon Intemperance entered the happy home, and weary months of mortification and suffering ensued.

Richard Worthington had always believed that he was strong and able to stand in the midst of temptation, and even after he had commenced to drink, and had been warned by his wife and others that he was treading on dangerous ground, he scouted the idea and said it was ridiculous and absurd.

"Pooh!" he exclaimed, "there is no danger. I can drink, and I can let it alone. I don't care a straw for intoxicating liquor. I only drink because it is customary among those with whom I associate."

Mr. Worthington's descent was rapid. In three years he was a drunken sot and his wife and children were in abject poverty. He neglected his work, squandered all the money he could get his hands on, and spent his time in the lowest grogeries. His wife remonstrated with him, and besought him again and again to give up his intemperate habits and endeavor to regain his place in society. She pleaded that he would not only drag their children down any deeper into disgrace and poverty, but make a bold stand and endeavor to do right. He promised to do better, for he loved his wife and children, and he strove hard to free himself from the tightening chain. But it was the old, old story. Temptation came, and again and again he fell.

The family occupied a poor tenement, a house of two rooms in the suburbs of the village. They slept in the upper story, while the lower room was used as a kitchen and sitting-room.

It was a cold night in the month of November. There was but little fuel, and Mrs. Worthington had taken the children and gone to bed. Cold and cheerless was the room, with no light and no fire, but not more cheerless than was this woman's life. No bright prospects rose before her. She was bound to a drunken husband, and looked forward only to wretchedness and woe.

After a time the mother and children slept, but the scanty covering and the chill winds made it a dismal, dreary sleep.

About midnight Richard was brought to his home by one of his companions. Both had been drinking deeply and were disgustingly intoxicated. They entered the house, and after a while succeeded in lighting a lamp. Drunken twaddle followed, then pushing, cursing, and foolish pranks, until the lamp was overturned and the house set on fire.

Richard and his companion were in such a condition that they barely escaped from the room. They thought not of the sleeping ones in the room above until a piercing shriek rent the air. Richard seemed to be sobered immediately.

"My God," he exclaimed, as an expression of horror crept over his face, "my wife and children are there and will be burnt to death!"

He dashed frantically to the burning building, but was driven back by the flames.

"You can't do anything now," said his companion. "Better keep away."

"O, my God!" shrieked the terror-stricken man, "must they perish thus? Julia! Julia! Alice! Harry! he cried piteously. "Oh! they're burning? they're burning! O merciful God! deliver them."

Wild with agony, he gazed upward to where he knew his wife and children must be. No screams could be heard now—nothing but the roaring and crackling of the flames.

"Oh!" he cried, "I dragged them down to poverty and disgrace, and then brought their lives to a terrible end. Why should I live? I'm a fiend incarnate; I'm a demon from the pit! I'll follow them. Julia, I come!"

Shrieking wildly, he sprang into the flames and went to his reckoning at the bar of God.—H. Elliot McBride, in *National Temperance Advocate*.

Girls and Boys.

DON'T BEGIN IT, BOYS.

There is a young lad in this city who has a good place, and attends faithfully to his duties. He had one bad habit, and that was

chewing tobacco, in which he indulged more freely than men who had chewed for fifty years. Last Saturday a gentleman offered the boy \$5 if he quit chewing for a year. Another followed suit, and a third, all signing their names to a paper agreeing to give the same sum. The boy said he would win the money, washed his mouth, and began right away. Sunday he felt badly, and Monday he was worse. Tuesday he shook and trembled like a man with the *delirium tremens*, and yesterday he was confined to his bed, from which he has got up, and it will take some time before the effects of the poison in his system can be worked out.—*Hartford Times*.

DAISIES.

She was a little Irish maid,
With light brown hair and eyes of gray,
And she had left her native shore
And journeyed miles and miles away.
Across the ocean, to the land,
Where waves the banner of the free,
And on her face a shadow lay,
For sick at heart for home was she.

When from the city's dust and heat
And ceaseless noise, they took her where
The birds were singing in the trees,
And flower fragrance filled the air,
And their leaf-crowned heads upraised
To greet the pretty gray-eyed lass,
A million blossoms starred the road
And grew among the waving grass.

"Why, here are daisies!" glad she cried,
And with hands clasped, sank on her knees;
"Now God be praised, who east and west
Scatters such lovely things as these!
Around my mother's cabin door
In dear old Ireland they grow,
With hearts of gold and slender leaves
As white as newly fallen snow."

Then up she sprang with smiling lips,
Though on her cheek there lay a tear,
"This land's not half so strange," she said,
"Since I have found the daisies here."

—Margaret Eyttinge in *Alden's Juveni e Gem*.

THINKING.

"Now, boys, I want you to do a little thinking," said Aunt Sue, as she sat with her sewing, to three little boys who were playing "Authors" near. "I'm going to read you a scrap out of the newspaper: 'The municipal government of Chicago imposes a fine of ten dollars upon any person who throws a banana-peel upon the pavement, which may trip up some unwary pedestrian.'"

"Good for that!" exclaimed Thomas. "Old Mrs. Jones slipped on a banana-skin last spring and broke her leg, and she'll never walk straight again, the doctor says."

"I'd like to know how they're going to find out who throws the skin," remarked Richard. "I could throw a dozen down and nobody'd know I did it."

"I think there's worse things than banana skins," said Thomas. "That's a little thing for the government to see to."

"Of course," Richard went on, "there's all the bad milk, and coffee, and tea, and meat, and groceries. Father says they 'dutterate everything nowadays.'"

"And what do you think, Harry?" asked Aunt Sue. "I see by your wrinkled-up forehead you have thoughts too."

"I was thinking about the liquor-stores," answered sober little Harry. "If the government make a law about such a little thing as a banana-skin, I don't see why they don't do something 'bout the liquor-stores that make so many men fall down in the streets drunk, and dead sometimes."

"Worse than dead," put in Richard. "My father says the rum-shops are criminal factories. He knows a store that has sent two hundred men to State-prison."