



### The Sting of the Adder.

(Edgar White, in the 'National Advocate'.)

Jack Markham was going to the bad. Surely, swiftly, hopelessly—straight as a bolt from a cross-bow. Then something happened.

I am a firm believer in the doctrine that the Lord always brings clearly to a man his true condition before he turns his head forever. At least he did so in Markham's case. During the campaign which resulted in Markham's election as attorney for the great mining county of Clarendon he drank a great deal, because he was a good fellow and the voters expected him to set 'em up. He was generous—more than that; he would give when he couldn't afford it. He didn't have what you call the hereditary whiskey appetite, but he was too social and good-natured to ever refuse a drink or to neglect responding with a like favor to his friends.

For a while after entering upon his new duties Markham sought to put on the brakes a little, because he was honest, though a drinker, and really desired to fill his position efficiently. Yet there were times when he came into court, 'under the influence,' which is a way of beating the devil around the stump, when you mean that a man is semi-intoxicated. Once in a while designing attorneys for the defence 'loaded' up 'the State of Missouri' on the eve of an important trial. I remember one occasion when this was done with desperate deliberation, because the defendant's case was desperate; that is, it would have been with a clear-headed attorney representing the State. A man had taken life with scant semblance of excuse, and his lawyers were burning the 'midnight' to think of a way out. A cunning member of the defendant's legal battery volunteered to do the trick. On the day of trial the court room was crowded, for the crime had attracted wide attention because of its peculiar atrocity. Markham had no associate, as the dead man's friends were poor. Just before he arose to present the State's case to the jury someone from behind threw a legal envelope on his table and removed another one which had been lying there. Markham picked up the envelope, nervously fished out a paper and staggered before the jury. The judge frowned. The State's representative was unquestionably drunk. He opened out the paper and stared stupidly at it for a few moments. Instead of the indictment, it was a copy of some paper announcing the virtues of a certain inebriate institution. The bold type display lines were large enough for the jurymen, and those near the bar to read, and they communicated by smiling whispers to those outside. A roar of coarse laughter shattered the dignity of the court room. This argued well for the defence, for juries seldom convict when in the atmosphere of mirth. In the vernacular of the street, the cunning lawyer for the defence had 'delivered the goods.'

At the ribaldry, the prosecuting attorney straightened up and looked mistily at the sea of grins and gibes around him. Then he turned his eyes to the paper in his hand and became deathly pale.

That is where the Lord spoke to Jack Markham, and you can never get me to believe anything else. Like a blow from the fist of an enemy came the realization that he stood branded before his fellow citizens as a common drunkard. Those who pretend to know say that dreadful shocks will sober a man. In this case I know that Markham walked steadily back to his table and placed the inebriate circular thereon. Then he passed his hand slowly across his broad, white forehead, and, turning to the judge, said:

'Your Honor, will I be permitted to make a few remarks outside of the case?'

The judge was a fair man. He saw some-

thing in the burning eyes of the attorney which told him he was going to make a fight to regain his standing. Besides, the judge more than suspected the inebriate circular was a trick of the defence, and he did not approve the method.

'You may make such explanation as you desire, Mr. Markham,' he said. The prosecuting attorney, no longer drunk, walked over and faced the jury. There was a portentous silence and an eager crouching forward of the spectators.

'Gentlemen,' said Markham, gravely, 'I tender to you my most earnest apology. In presuming to address you after what has occurred, my sole excuse is to re-establish myself in your confidence. I came here drunk. I am now sober. God being my helper, I want to pledge to you twelve men that you shall never see Jack Markham drunk again.'

A murmur of applause swept around the gloomy court room, which, of course, the judge quickly suppressed. The attorneys for the defence, keenly sensitive of the shifting atmosphere, were all on their feet at once, protesting against the prosecutor's unwarranted speech.

'It is his right, gentlemen,' said the judge, calmly, 'if you have sown the wind, you must bow your heads to the consequences.'

Again they 'objected and excepted' to the court's language, but it did them not a particle of good.

Markham found the indictment and read it in clear, impressive tones. Then he reviewed the evidence the States would present like a master architect describing the construction of a house. The people in the court room were appalled at the sinister story, and those who had laughed the loudest were now the most sombre. No man with anything like a heart in him could joke after the attorney's simple, clear statement of the dreadful homicide. The general solemnity was reflected in the faces of the jurymen.

Throughout the long, hot trial the prosecutor was alert, active, unwearying. He knew that one Jack Markham, as well as the prisoner at the bar, was on trial, and he made it the battle of his life.

The opposing counsel became tired and relieved each other in the examining ordeal. Markham, single-handed, fought them to cover and never permitted anything like the aggressive to manifest itself on the side of the defence. By the kindling light in the jurymen's eyes he saw he was winning the struggle.

At the afternoon adjournment the cunning lawyer approached Markham, and, taking him confidentially by the arm, sought to lead him into a saloon. The prosecutor determinedly drew back.

'Didn't you hear what I told the jury?' he asked.

'Oh, yes, but that was just for effect; come along, Jack. A little of the stuff will clear your head.'

'If you think that so beneficial,' said the prosecutor, grimly, 'you can try it yourself. I am done with it forever, and that's all there is about it.'

They made no further attempt to get him to drink; they had plenty of troubles of their own to look after in the court room. At the close of the third day the evidence was all in, and Markham was as fresh as a schoolgirl in her flower garden on a May morning. Before the case was submitted to the jury the defence offered

to plead guilty and take two years in the penitentiary.

'I would like to accommodate you, gentlemen,' said Markham, 'but it won't do. I started in this trial drunk, and I must convince the people that I went out of it sober.'

In the summing up, one of the defendant's lawyers was unwise enough to refer to the prosecutor's condition when he first got up with the inebriate circular in his hand. Markham saw the jury frown and made no objection to the cruel thrust of his opponent. But when his time came to close the case for the State his candid admission of the charge, together with his touching pledge to redeem himself, brought tears to many eyes, even affecting the jurymen. Markham would not have touched on the subject unless the defence had first introduced it, and they realized their mistake too late.

The prosecutor had the jury with him from the beginning. The honest man always feels way down deep in his heart that the penitent should be given a chance.

The prosecutor's speech was clear, appealing, incisive. There was no bombast, no flowers of rhetoric; just an honest, manly, common-sense presentation, which left no room for doubt that a serious crime had been committed.

So hopelessly did they feel the outcome that not one of the defendant's lawyers was in the court room when the jury brought in its verdict of 'guilty.'

To-day Mr. Markham is one of the most earnest temperance advocates in our country. No sooner did he feel the ground become solid under his own feet than he began a systematic effort to reclaim his fellows who were travelling the path he had been over before them. I heard him make this talk to a young man one day:

'My boy, you can't afford to do it if you expect to be somebody. This world is looking for fighters. Men who drink liquor go down before reaching the battle line. Worthy ambition and whiskey never dwell long in the same brain. The men who are doing things to-day are those who have long since learned the importance of a clear head. I know the stuff enthralls you and makes you feel for a while as if you and all the world are friends, but the price is too heavy—too heavy by far. I've dealt in that market, and I know!'

Take a drink? No, not I!

Reason's taught me better

Than to bind my very soul

With a falling fetter.

Water, sweet and cool and free,

Has no cruel chains for me.

—Selected.

### How a Peer Took the Pledge.

In 1844 Father Mathew amused a large party at the house of an Irish nobleman in London by his attempts to convert the noble Lord to teetotalism. 'I drink very little wine,' said Brougham; 'only half a glass at luncheon, and two half-glasses at dinner, and though my medical advisers told me I should increase the quantity, I refused to do so.' 'They are wrong, my Lord, for advising you to increase the quantity,' said Father Mathew, playfully, 'and you are wrong in taking even the small quantity you mention, but I have my hopes of you'; and, despite the good-humored resistance of Brougham, he invested his Lordship with the green ribbon and silver medal of the Total Abstinence Society. 'I'll tell you what I'll do,' said Brougham. 'I'll take a ribbon to the House of Lords, where I shall be sure to meet old Lord — the worse for liquor, and I will put it on him.' This announcement was received with much laughter by the company, for the Peer referred to was notorious for his deep potations. A few evenings later Brougham met him in the House of Lords. 'Lord —,' said he, 'I have a present from Father Mathew for you,' and he passed the ribbon and medal rapidly over the old Peer's head. 'Then I'll tell you what it is, Brougham. I'll keep it from this night!' exclaimed the other, and, to the great amazement of all his friends, he remained faithful to his vow.—'Temperance Leader.'

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