

corpse. This being placed upon the shoulders of four stout men, they took up their line of march, in solemn procession, for the village. Austin, who was now partially restored, being supported on either side by one of the villagers, brought up the rear.

After the party had left the village to render assistance to the absentees, some of the kind-hearted neighbors, by the request of their parents, assisted to convey George and Joe, who were still unconscious of what was passing around them, to their respective homes. Then those that remained in the village gathered themselves into knots upon the corners of the streets and talked the matter over among themselves.

Things had remained thus for the space of an hour, when the mournful procession, conveying the body of Julia Crawford, came in sight. The villagers at once advanced to meet it. While making some inquiries, and learning the true state of things, many a tear was seen to course down the cheek, and many a pitying glance was cast upon the bereaved mother. But she heeded them not. She was too much absorbed in her own heart-rending affliction to notice anything that was passing around her. They conveyed the body of Julia to her mother's house, and after performing all the services that lay in their power, they departed, one by one, with the promise that two of their number would return and watch with the corpse that night.

The sun was fast sinking in the west, and all nature seemed about to take repose. No sound broke upon the silence of the room, where sat the mother by the corpse of her only child—her last earthly stay and comfort—save an occasional sob that would find utterance, as if to allay the emotion that seemed to rend the mother's heart in twain.—The sun had now hid himself behind the western hills, yet still the mother could not tear herself away. She sat thus until disturbed by the two neighbors who had returned to watch over the corpse, when, yielding to their urgent solicitations, she returned to her room.

The sun was shining brightly into George Manchester's room, on the following morning, ere he awoke. His head ached sadly, and he felt much the worse for his impudence of the day before. He arose, and after dressing himself, stepped across the way to a public house to procure a glass of wine, for he felt his mouth parched with thirst. There was no one in but a small boy when he entered, who waited on him. Just as he was about to raise the glass to his lips, he heard his name pronounced in such a solemn tone of voice, that he instinctively turned to see from whence the sound proceeded. As he turned he was confronted by Austin Hart, who gave him a look that made the very blood chill in his veins. He did not, however, comprehend the meaning of that look, but supposed it was Austin's purpose to reproach him for his conduct of the day before, and his face crimsoned with shame.

"George," exclaimed Austin, "are you aware that you have been the means of Julia Crawford's death?"

"What? how? Julia dead? I cannot comprehend!"

"Yes, she is dead, and you were the cause of it!"

"I the cause of it!" exclaimed George, his eyes starting from their sockets, and his whole frame trembling with emotion. "I the cause of it! you must be joking!"

"Never more serious in my life," returned Austin. He then proceeded to relate to him the circumstances as they had transpired. After he had concluded, George replaced the glass of wine upon the counter untasted—for his thirst was forgotten—and rushed from the room. As he emerged into the street he looked wildly about him as though he could not comprehend his situation; and then, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he passed hastily down the street in the direction of the widow Crawford's. When he reached the door he hesitated, as if at a loss whether to go in or to retrace his steps. At length, however, he opened the door which led into the kitchen, and stepped silently into the house. All

was silent within. No human being met his anxious gaze. He stepped across the room to the door that led from the kitchen into the sitting-room, where he had often whiled away the evening hours in Julia's company. He silently lifted the latch and entered. But a faint gleam of light was admitted through the closely drawn curtains. He looked inquiringly around, when his gaze fell upon a bed which stood in one corner of the room, upon which lay the corpse. Treading lightly, he approached, and lifted the cloth that concealed the face. He gazed upon the cold, calm face of the dead. No smile relaxed those rigid features; no voice of welcome issued from those closed lips which had so often expressed the joy of the heart at his presence. How his heart was rent with anguish as he stood and gazed as if spell-bound. After remaining thus for about ten minutes, in perfect silence, he carefully replaced the cloth and withdrew.

The day of the funeral at length arrived. Friends had been sent for and were present. The man of God was there also, together with a large number of sympathizing neighbors. The anguish of a bereaved mother—the tears shed by sympathizing friends—who has not witnessed them? and who does not know how powerless is the pen to depict such a scene? Let us, then, pass it over in silence. George Manchester remained in his room throughout the whole of that day. What his thoughts were those only can tell who have been similarly situated.

Reader, pass with us the period of one year. Who is that miserable drunkard staggering along the street of the village of N—, the sport of the rude boys who follow him, and the pity of every humane passer-by? It is George Manchester: "O, thou invisible spirit of wine," what a sad change hast thou wrought in the person of the once gay and thoughtless George Manchester! Ever since the day on which the funeral of Julia Crawford took place, he had been gradually but surely, treading the road that leads to the drunkard's grave. He drank to drown trouble—deeper and deeper—until he had brought himself to a realization of his object—a forgetfulness of his sorrows. He was scarcely ever sober long enough for the least shadow of reflection. His relatives put forth every exertion in their power to save him from the inevitable doom that seemed to await him.—Friends entreated, but all to no purpose, and he died of the delirium tremens just eighteen months from the day of Julia's death.

But what a contrast to this was the after life of Austin Hart. He became the happy husband of Lucy Martin, and lived a peaceful life, doing good to all around him. And Joseph Howell, having become a strong temperance man, enjoyed the good, in a high degree, resulting therefrom.—He became a warm advocate of the cause, and gave occasionally a public address in its favor, when he would detail to a listening audience what the demon wine had done for his once bosom friend, with thrilling effect. He had shortly after become united to Mary Clifford, who, though she grieved the untimely end of her friend, felt happy in the reformation of Joseph, which was brought about by that event. The widow Crawford survived her daughter but a few months. She died broken-hearted.—*N. Y. Reformer.*

Annual Conference.

The Seventeenth Annual Conference of the British Association for the Promotion of Temperance has now become a fact of history, and the record of its deliberations is herewith sent forth to the public, for their inspection and instruction. The immediate and remote influences of such assemblies it is impossible fully to estimate; they take a wider range, probably, and lead to greater results than the actors therein have any conception of. Besides being useful as mediums of explanation and suggestion in relation to the special object which each has in view, they tend to quicken the activities and inflame the zeal of the best friends of every good cause.