



A Sore Temptation.

(Birdie E. Slade, in the 'National Advocate'.)

The school had closed, for holiday time had come,
And the boys were joyously filled with thoughts of home;
But one stood apart with a gloomy and wistful face,
For in the gleeful rush he had no place.
Three months ago he'd bidden a long farewell
To his parents, who went to a distant land to dwell;
And he alone, amid all that throng of boys,
Had scarcely the heart to join in their fun and noise.

But one came near with a bound and cry of glee:

'Hurrah, old man! here's jolly news,' cried he;
'My father says if you've nowhere else to go,
You'd better just come along and join our show.
'Twill be so dull for you to stop here alone;
And it doesn't matter a bit that you've never known
Our folks before, for they'll all be glad to see
A fellow who's done so many good turns for me.'

So, nothing loth, our hero packed up and went,
A little shy, of course, but earnestly bent
On doing his best to please his friends so kind,
And hoping a pleasant holiday to find.

Pleasant indeed did his schoolmate's home appear,—

All vied the lonely boy to welcome and cheer;
And quickly flew the bright hours on wings of joy,

With nought to grieve, and but little to annoy.
But then came an evening when, to celebrate
A great rejoicing, a feast was set in state.
The eldest son, who had as a volunteer
His country served, in the distant scenes so drear

Where bloodshed reigns, had come to his home
once more,

Proud of the scars which he as war's trophy bore;
And intimate friends were called to rejoice that he

Had safely returned to his anxious family.

The glasses were filled, and the father, with ready hand,

Gave the toast of 'The lads who strive for their native land.'

'Drink! drink!' cried he, 'to the health and success of those

Who fight for their country's honor and others' woes.'

A murmur arose—each heart felt the patriot's thrill,

For the soldier wins from his fellows swift plaudits still.

But one hand stretched out for the glass was strangely stayed,

And Arthur sat trembling—troubled and sore dismayed.

How could he drink this pledge in the sparkling wine?

He who had learned that the fangs of the serpent shine

In its ruby depths; who was pledged to ever shun

The tempter which had his native land undone.

'But you must!' urged an inward voice; 'you cannot refuse

To share in the toast, and such kindness as this abuse.

Nor can you tell your host you know better than he

What your drink for pledging the hero's health should be.'

But thro' these specious whispers a memory came—

'My boy,' said a soft voice, 'never let fear or shame

Deter you from doing the thing that is right;
Keep the gospel armor and temperance shield all bright.'

'Please, sir,' came in trembling tones, and all eyes were turned
To the lad on whose cheeks the scorching blushes burned—

'I want to drink the toast, but I musn't take
A single sip of the wine, or my pledge I'd break.

Please, sir, may I have some water.' The kind host frowned

And for a moment a scornful laugh went round.
But quickly arose in his place the soldier young,

And a strange confession fell from his faltering tongue.

'I thank you, young stranger,' he said, 'who has come to save

My cowardly heart from committing an error grave.

Father, I too have need of the temperance vow,
Tho' never my weakness has been confessed till now.

On the battle field yonder I saw it, and vowed,
if spared,

I'd seek the new life for which I had never cared:

But in the excitement of home-coming I forgot
That folly which cast on my soldier-life a blot.

This lad has shown me the courage that's truest and best,

And I really think we had better drink with our guest;

For the wine is a deadlier foe—as I've proved too well—

Than any that ever abroad on our nation fell.
Let us cast it away, and now, for each other's sake,

To the perils of social customs grow fully awake!

Let us fight for the souls of men as for national right,

And try to wash our country's dark record white.'

The father listened amazed; but his heart was wise,

And his son's great peril was flashing before his eyes:

He saw his responsibility vast—untold—
And hastened his strength to the weaker hand to hold.

'It shall be as you wish,' he said—and the wine was cast

From the social board; while the young guest's terror passed,

And the soldier's heart grew strong in the new-made vow,

That seemed so easy to cherish and live by now.

A happy boy was our hero, as back he went
To school with his comrade, when holidays all were spent;

For tho' Fred pretended to please, and often complained

That he had stolen their sweets of life, he knew there remained

In that happy home a joy that had deeper grown

Because an enemy had been overthrown.

Yet Arthur had only simply done the right,
As every boy may do who is here to-night.

The Universal Dissolvent.

'Will alcohol dissolve sugar?'
'It will,' replied Old Soak; 'it will dissolve gold and brick houses, and horses, and happiness and love and everything else worth having.—Houston 'Post.'

Knowledge.

'Oh! he drinks, of course, but he says that he knows when he's had enough.'

'That may be, but by the time he acquires that knowledge he knows nothing else, not even his own name.'—Philadelphia 'Press.'

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HOUSEHOLD.

In Summer-time.

Our hearts go out in summer-time,
When earth is glad with life,
And balmy whisperings of love
Have stilled all wintry strife,
To Him who made the sunshine bright
With waking power ablaze,
Who clothed our land with verdant-down,
And filled the skies with praise.

Our hearts find rest in shady vales,
Where tuneful streamlets run,
And velvet banks so soft and green
Invite the weary one;
Where smiling sunbeams shyly peer
And heavenly songsters dwell
In sight of Him, their songs to sing,
Who doeth all things well.

New strength we gain in summer-time
From sunny, breezy height,
From joyous earth and gleaming sea,
All beaming with delight;
So fresh and free, this bracing breath
New hope and ardor gives
To serve with praise, when, summer gone,
The deadening autumn lives.

Our hearts go out to God in praise,
A Paradise is here;
And we are His and He is ours—
Our Saviour ever dear;
Yet brighter glory reigns beyond,
This, too, our eyes shall see,
For all is ours, both there and here
And through eternity.

--G. W. Keeseey, in the 'Examiner.'

The Woman of Tact.

A woman of tact is one who feels that the story told to hurt your feelings is essentially bad form and inconsiderate of the feelings of others. A woman of tact is the woman who is courteous to old people, who laughs with the young, and who makes herself agreeable to all women in all conditions of life. A woman of tact is one who makes her good-morning a pleasant greeting, her visit a bright spot in the day, and her good-by a hope that she may come again. A woman of tact is one who does not always gauge people by their clothes or their riches, but who strongly condemns bad manners. A veritable woman of tact is the best type of a Christian, for her very consideration makes other women always long to imitate her. A woman of tact is one who is courteous under all circumstances, and in every condition in which she may be placed. A woman of tact is one whose love for humanity is second only to her life's devotion, and whose watchword is unswerving unselfishness in thought and action, at all times, and in every season. By putting self last it finally becomes natural to have it so.—Exchange.

Rhubarb, the Old Reliable.

(G. D., in the 'New England Homestead'.)

There's something generous and faithful about the way rhubarb springs up and spreads its big leaves just as early as it possibly can. Sometimes I think we don't appreciate it as we should.

Only think, it will give up its own flavor and share that of most any fruit. This doesn't seem possible when you consider how marked its taste is. In that way you can eke out a shortage of fruit very easily. First boil it without sugar, then strain, and you have a foundation for deceptive flavors.

Rhubarb and black currants boiled together

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