

A Religious View of Temperance.

The strict and conscientious observance of a total abstinence rule in relation to intoxicating liquors, is by no means the whole, nor even the most important part of religion. The possession of a *new heart* is the root of all true goodness, but from it temperance as a branch is sure to spring. Evangelical religion will therefore always have this high pre-eminence over all mere moral-reform efforts, that it makes good the whole tree of human character, permeating the soul with a new spiritual life, from which "love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance," grow as blessed clusters to adorn and nourish individual, domestic and social happiness. All these qualities flourish best when they are the genuine growth of inward purity. Yet as a result of the general Redemption, a measure of virtue is possible to men without this regenerating grace of the gospel. And from motives of benevolence, Christians are more interested in the progress of virtue than are any other class of people.

Temperance effort is needed as a protection to those who have commenced the Christian life. The force of sinful habit is so great that the truly converted are more liable to fall by their old foes than by other forms of temptation. All faithful Christian pastors know how difficult it is to lead on to maturity of grace the convert who, before his conversion, was accustomed to visit the grog-shop. Shameful backslidings from a Christian course are unquestionably more numerous from this cause than from any other. Hence as a means of self-protection the church should be in earnest on the temperance question, in order to remove this stumbling-block out of the way of weak brethren. Weak in this respect only, and that per force of habit and depraved appetite. A careful review of numerous facts which have come under our own observation, have convinced us that church members generally are not sufficiently aware of the value of special treatment for the cure of such sin-enfeebled souls, nor how much a good temperance organization may aid the church in the performance of her work. Beyond a doubt, more Christian ministers have fallen from their high position through strong drink than from any other cause. Perhaps the Christian church is less guilty in this regard now than in former years, and vastly less so than the outside world; "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink." But the principal service rendered to religion, by the operation of temperance societies, is in "preparing the way of the Lord," or inducing that state of mind and social condition favourable to the reception of gospel truth. Thousands, both in city and country, are prevented from attending places of worship through poverty and shame caused by intemperance, and which may be effectually removed by the signing and keeping of a temperance pledge. Many modern maniacs, like the one re-

corded in Scripture, when the demon of intemperance is cast out, sit at the feet of Jesus, "clothed and in their right mind." The children of such parents will soon be found cheaply though neatly clad, timidly waiting at the door of our Sunday Schools, to receive from pious teachers their first lessons in the ways of right living.—*Peninsular Herald.*

PRAYER ANSWERED.

In one of the cottage houses of a densely peopled village in the West Riding of Yorkshire, about nineteen years ago, a pious woman was sitting waiting the return of her husband from his daily toil. It was almost midnight; her children were in bed—they were accustomed to rise early, from the eldest to the youngest, to add to the common stock—a stock diminished by the intemperance of the father, who, for some time, had been in the habit of spending his evenings at a neighbouring public-house. His wife was an industrious woman, and the duties of her family had engaged her attention up to that hour. She put away some articles of clothing she had been mending for one of the children; and, wearied in mind and body, anxiously waited for the well-known step of her husband. Her thoughts wandered back to her early wedded life; they were both at that time thoughtless and gay. She thought of the gradual estrangement from home of her once devoted husband; of the birth of her first child; and how, when watching over it, she had been led to think of the prayers of a now glorified mother; how she, too, had knelt and prayed for the forgiveness of sins, and obtained mercy through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and how she had been enabled to hold on her troubled way, at times rejoicing even in tribulation. She had prayed long for her husband's conversion, and, thus far, saw no answer to her prayers; but her confidence in God remained unshaken; and now, placing the Bible (her solace and joy since she had found the way of peace) on the seat of the arm-chair, she knelt and read some of the precious promises of God; then, pouring forth her soul in simple, child-like prayer, such as only a woman, strong in faith, could have offered, she rose, refreshed, strengthened, and calm. Throwing a shawl over her head, she wended her way to the too well-known public-house. As she raised the latch, the clock struck one.

Her husband was sitting in the bar with some of his fellow-workmen and the landlady, when she entered. In an angry tone he bade her go home. The landlady said, "Wait a little, your husband will go with you." She advanced to the table where they were sitting, and said in a calm voice to the landlady,

"Mrs. ———, seven years is a long time to wait for anything, is it not?"

"Yes," said the landlady, "but fourteen years is longer, is it not?"

"Yes," answered the wife, "but twenty-one years is longer still. I have waited and prayed twenty-one years for the con-

version of my husband; and, as sure as he is sitting in your bar, I shall live to see him pass this house, and have no inclination to enter; for God will answer my prayer."

She turned to leave the room, and her husband followed her; but no angry word passed his lips—he seemed to quail before her.

About this time, the Rev. J. Rattabury was stationed at Leeds. On the Sunday following the night just mentioned, Martin ——— was induced to accompany his praying wife to hear him. The text announced was the pious resolution of Ruth: "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." The word came home with power; the arrow of conviction sank deep into his soul. For several days he groaned for mercy; but the hour of deliverance came.

"The Spirit answered to the blood,
And told him he was born of God."

On the Sunday after his conversion, Martin returned from the chapel to his now happy home, with a firm step—the mid-day meal was spread upon the table—children were already seated; but his heart was full. "Children," said he, "your mother's prayers are now answered. I have passed that house where I spent so much time and money, without the least desire to enter. Let us praise the Lord together." They fell upon their knees—he by the arm-chair, on the spot which had been, in times past, a Bethel and an Ebenezer to his wife—and, with joyful hearts, they two raised their hearts and voices in gratitude and praise. ——— plucked him as a brand from the burning; alike acknowledging his weakness, and asking strength to stand in the hour of temptation.

God heard those prayers; and Martin ——— became as eminent for piety as he had before been prominent in the service of Satan.

RECEIPT FOR KEEPING SOBER.

In a rural district, in the North of England, the following dialogue lately took place between a friend and a shoemaker who had signed the temperance pledge:

"Well, William, how are you?"

"Oh, pretty well. I had only eighteen-pence and an old hen when I signed, and a few old scores; but now I have about ten pounds in the bank, and my wife and I have lived through the summer without getting into debt. But as I am only thirty weeks old yet, (so he styled himself,) I cannot be so strong yet, my friend."

"How is it you never signed before?"

"I did sign; but I keep it different now to what I did before, friend."

"How is this?"

"Why, I *gave doon* on my knees and pray."

Better informed persons might learn a lesson in this respect, by applying to the source of strength now possessed by William, the shoemaker.