



Where Two Ways Met

(Emma E. Hornibrook, in 'New York Observer'.)

Gladys Laude was visiting a hospital for the first time. A maid who served her faithfully for three years had an injury to the spine, and was now a patient in the woman's ward.

Miss Laude looked around at the long clean room with its row of beds. It was different to what she had expected, not gloomy or depressing, but bright and even cheerful. There were flowers in the windows, and it was good to watch the nurses, with their spotlessly neat dresses and quiet movements. It passed through her mind what grand lives those women were leading, devoting their best efforts to the relief of human suffering.

She could recall a time when some idea of such a consecration possessed her. That was when she joined the church, and was introduced to the happy meetings of a Young People's Society. How she had loved her young sisters in the faith! but other things intruded, she was brought out in society, formed other friendships and knew another love. How strangely it all came back to her now.

'How good of you to come, Miss,' the poor girl who had often dressed her for a dance was saying. 'I like to think of them beautiful clothes you got.'

'I am afraid that does not help you much,' replied Gladys, feeling the miserable inadequacy of any comfort she could offer. 'I suppose some minister visits here?'

'Yes, when he's wanted. But—' with a motion of her head toward a cot at the other side of the room—'that little girl over there is a real saint out of Heaven. She's been months and months lying there, yet no one ever hears her complain. And when some of the rest of us cries out in pain, or can't sleep at night, she says something lovely—perhaps a verse out of the Bible, or a line of a hymn—and it's just like a soft breath from another world, or a stray bit of music. It quiets us.'

Miss Laude looked across and met the gaze of earnest blue eyes.

'I shall go and speak to her before I leave,' she said.

A little later she was holding the hand of the young patient, whose sweet face, with God's peace upon it, was turned to hers.

'You suffer pain?' she inquired gently.

'Yes, sometimes—not all the time.'

'Are your nights easy?'

A flush spread over the thin cheeks and the eyes fairly glowed.

'At first they gave me sleeping drops,' she answered in a low tone. 'But I do not like them, they bother my head so I cannot think. And then, do you know, the Lord himself speaks to me in the quiet of the night. I can 'most put out my hand and touch him, he's that near. Last night I heard him say, as plain as any voice could say it, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee." And so I am not afraid.'*

Gladys Laude walked very slowly home that day. She even entered a park, and, seeking a remote and secluded corner, sat down to reflect. It seemed to her she had come to a place where two ways met. And which should she choose? On her decision might depend the happiness or misery of a lifetime.

That Harold Gage loved her sincerely she never doubted, yet that love had not

been of sufficient force to enable him to overcome an evil habit when boon companions enticed him. Twice since their engagement had he yielded to temptation and become intoxicated. The last time was shortly before her visit to the hospital.

Why had her influence not proved his safeguard, and if it could not keep him straight now, would it be likely to do so when she was his wife? These questions tortured her, yet they must be met. The answer was obvious. The keeping power must come from without and revolutionize the man's whole being—and hers also. Each, for himself and herself, they must seek the aid which cometh from above, and is never sought in vain. In this alone they could overcome. Had she not witnessed the victory of faith in the hospital, rising above all dread of death, and giving peace in pain?

How long she wrestled thus with doubt and despair she knew not. One thing was clear at last, she heard a voice among the trees of the garden, and it said, 'Return unto me for I have redeemed thee.'

Harold Gage raved, stormed, pleaded, agonized in vain, Gladys remained firm. If at the end of two years he could come to tell her that by the help of God he had not tasted liquor during that time, then she would become his wife, but on no other terms. And so they parted.

Then there began a new life for Gladys Laude; a life of high aims and humble endeavor. Her father was dead, and a gentle mother allowed the girl to take her own way. As days passed on she too saw it was the best way.

And Gladys had her reward, a hundred-fold in daily peace, and another hundred-fold when Harold Gage, his probation ended, claimed her as his bride. By Divine grace, on which in weakness he had cast himself, the drink habit was overcome.

In Hope Cemetery, under a spreading tree, is a plain marble slab with this inscription:

In Loving Memory of

ELLEN KEENE,

Aged 17.

From one who oweth unto her even her own self.

Is Teetotalism Scriptural?

The Rev. G. Armstrong Bennetts, B.A., who was appointed by the Wesleyan Conference to give special attention to Temperance Work in the Connexion, has recorded this incident: 'I was recently in company with a very eminent minister of religion who said, "What I want to know is where the New Testament says that I ought to be a teetotaler?" Another minister of considerable learning, who was present, replied, "Everywhere." This incident has its practical counterpart and value here in Canada. Only last week we heard of a Minister of the Crown somewhere in our land who was stumbling over the same difficulty. Does the Bible support this attitude of total abstinence and national prohibition? The request is for some letter or some text or some paragraph that positively and authoritatively covers the whole ground with express and literal, "Thou shalt not."

It is well to remember that 'the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.' Mr. Bennetts is warranted in saying, 'There is no man so far away from a true intellectual grasp of the idea of Christianity as the Biblical fragmentist who would make Christian ethics into a series of isolated precepts patched together.' . . . 'How true it is that the letter killeth! It killeth both the interpretation and the interpreter.'

The Bible, in both the Old and New Testament, reveals a condition of society in which intoxicating liquor is used, but it does not follow that the use of strong drink, as a common beverage, is approved. The Bible also reveals a condition of society in which slavery is a general usage, and in which polygamy is commonly practiced, but these are not approved because, in every case, they are not precisely reprov'd. The spirit of the revelation

of God, which is 'everywhere' throughout the Bible, is clearly against slavery, polygamy, lust, and strong drink.

On what grounds, is it asked? The three broadest grounds may be thus stated. There is the Divine authority of natural laws, which is everywhere acknowledged in the Bible, and only denied by the atheist, and these natural laws are against the common beverage use of strong drink. Liquor, like lust, has always proved too strong for human nature when tampered with. The physical wreckage is everywhere.

Again, there is a Divine authority everywhere ringing through the Bible, which says, 'Save thyself and thy house.' There is Divine authority for the prayer, 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.' There can be no consistency in offering such a prayer, and then deliberately creating a certain form of evil and walking into the midst of its temptations.

Again, there is a Divine authority for the fundamental law of Christian ethics, namely, 'Self-Sacrifice for the Sake of Others.' The common use of alcoholic liquors is no necessity and no advantage, but has proved one of the greatest curses. In such a case we help to save our brother and neighbor by abstaining and prohibiting.

The three strands are physiological truth concerning the poison alcohol, personal and family salvation, and 'the law of the cross.'—'Christian Guardian.'

Does Liquor Help?

Not only does drinking not brighten the intellect and increase its working power, but it breaks down the integrity of nature and the vitality of the men who drink. 'Alcohol is injurious,' Dr. J. Solis-Cohen, of Philadelphia, is reported to have said: 'A man may drink it to deaden his sorrow, but the pendulum will always swing so far one way as it does the other. If he finds happiness or joy in intoxication, he will pay for it by consequential misery when he gets sober. It might stimulate the minds of some temporarily, but it would soon kill their intellects and shorten their lives. Physicians agree that it is a bad thing. All stimulants are injurious. A few years ago we stopped the use of liquor in the Home for Consumptives. Since that time there has been a marked decrease in the number of hemorrhages. It is bad in every way.'

Of course the young man who begins to drink does not intend to drink enough to be injured by it. He believes he can control himself, and he despises the drunkard who has surrendered his manhood and his self-control as thoroughly as any abstainer does. But what evidence has any young man that he can retain control of this appetite? Let any young man who thinks he can, look up the family history of the people whom he knows best, his own family history, even. In few cases will he be able to recall two generations without meeting a drunkard, who meant to be only a moderate drinker when he began. No drunkard meant to be a drunkard when he began. He did not intend to acquire the habit of drink. But a habit fixes itself upon the man who does the acts in which the roots of the habit reside. Even if the habit is but one of moderate drinking, that is the only road to the habit of immoderate drinking. And it is a road that is surer to run that way than the other.—Robert E. Spier.

Next Temperance Step.

I suggest a statewide campaign for state prohibition. In every church, every young people's society, every W. C. T. U., every I.O.G.T. in every village and school district throughout the state, let a committee be appointed by each to distribute incidents and facts as to the prohibitory laws, their enforcement and benefits. The people want state prohibition. Give them the work they want to do, and they will do it. J. Benson Hill, Michigan.

* This girl's experience and utterances are strictly true.