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THE LAMENT OF A DRUNKARD'S WIFE.

Oh! I was once a happy wife,
Had neither sorrow, grief, nor care;
I lived a quiet, contented life,
Beloved by him I lo'd most dear;
For then my Jamie was sincere,
An' wun'd a life o' honest fame,
To rise bytimes he wun'a sweer;
At night he aye cam' sober hame.

But, wae's my heart, there cam' a change
O'er Jamie's mind—I kenna hoo—
Wi'ither eliels he 'gan to range
Ilk e'enin, when his work was through;
The public house they aye gaed to,
An' there they drank, an' swore, an' sang,
Till whisky fill'd them a' sae fit,
That hame they n'er were fit to gang.

Oh, whiskey is a deadly curse—
A thing that's guid for nocht ava;
My Jamie grew frae bad to worse,
An' n'er frae drink could bide awa;
His faithfu' wife an' bairnies sma'
Who strove to keep him aye at hame,
Were left in hunger's cruel claw,
To mourn their wretchedness an' shame.

I'm worn doon wi' grief an' care,
My bairnies cry for bread—for bread!
My heart is sair, an' cold despair
Creeps o'er my soul wi' weight o' lead;
I feel as tho' the slender thread
O' my pair life were soon to break,
But spare, O God Almighty, spare
The mither, for the children's sake!

For oh! I canna, canna leave
Them friendless, hameloss, here below—
Their little hearts would sadly grieve—
Would break—if e'er it should be so.
Baith day an' night, that they may know
The less o' want, the less o' ill,
Whate'er my han's may find to do,
That will I do, wi' a' my skill.

An' oh! if Jamie yet would mend,
And be what ance he was before;
Oh wad he never mair attend
Their drunken spree, or filthy splore,
Then, as in happy days o' yore,
Around our wee bit cottage hearth,
Our bairns might play—a merry core—
An' wake sweet notes o' joy an' mirth.

Edinburgh. ALEX. STUART.

Original Tale.

[WRITTEN FOR THE ABSTAINER.]

SIDNEY'S WARNING.

It was an elegant room, half parlour, half library. The carpet was of the richest, softest texture, green blending in deep brown and fading away in pale crimson,—the furniture of curious and old-fashioned workmanship had defied the touch of time, and stood in its pristine glory a little stiffly to be sure, but yet far handsomer than half of the flimsy trash of modern make. On one side of the room stood a carved mahogany book-case filled with old-fashioned but substantial looking volumes that appeared as if they contained a world of information. A piano standing open, and pictures that bespoke the touch of a master hand arranged with care and exactness as to the effect of light and shade, told of the wealth and refined taste of the occupant. Near a large bow-window toward the west,—from which the heavy damask curtains were carelessly looped back to admit the last beams of departing day,—sat a lady—her mourning dress, trimmed with folds of sombre crape, fell gracefully around her slight figure, revealing the delicate whiteness of her complexion; the pure forehead gleamed like marble from beneath the dark abundant tresses that fell over it; and in the expression that lurked around the corners of the sweet mouth, was a world of sorrow subdued by christian resignation and holy trust; her large mournful eyes were fixed on a picture that hung opposite in a rich gilded frame—a picture of a noble looking man, evidently taken in the morning of life, in the glory of his young manhood; the full white brow, waving hair, and sweet earnest mouth, were an exact counterpart of hers, and told of the relationship existing between them. The glory of the day faded in the west, and the shadows deepened in the room, but yet she sat there apparently in deep meditation; for memory, painfully faithful to her trust, had drawn aside the veil of the

past, and before her with fearful distinctness passed scenes that had been enacted fifteen years before.

The door softly opened and a young man entered; not more than twenty summers had passed over his frank sunny brow, and sorrow had left no lingering trace there,—for Sidney Harrison's life had thus far been as joyous as a summer day. Everything that wealth and loving parents could procure had been his; an only child petted and indulged twenty years would have found him ruined, had not he possessed an open frank disposition, an ardent loving nature, mingled with a reverence of everything good and beautiful. To his mother's only sister, who had resided with them from the time of his fifth year, he owed much for what was really good in his character. It was impossible for any one to come within the range of her holy influence, and not be made better and purer by it.

"Well Auntie," he exclaimed, as he drew a footstool toward her, and seated himself at her feet; "I have come according to promise for the story you wished to tell me; but now I am here, you look so sad it almost frightens me, and I have a mind to back out, as they say."

"It is sad, Sidney," she answered, gently caressing the brown curls, "but if I did not believe it necessary for you, I would not pain you with a recital of the sorrows that have darkened my whole life.—Do you remember the words you so thoughtlessly uttered last night?"

"No, Aunt, what were they?"

"You know when Kate Murrey insisted upon your drinking wine with her, and held out the ruby liquid so temptingly, you replied something like this, 'Although I had partly decided to drink no more wine, yet who can resist so eloquent a pleader as you are, Miss Kate; I find Eve still lives.' Now, dear Sidney, it was said thoughtlessly I know, but if you could have known the pang that wrung my heart when I saw you so happy, gay, and unsuspecting, with your feet just pressing the brink of a flower-covered precipice, and knew you were lured from a promise made to me by the sweet voice of a lovely deceiver, who has not your soul's welfare at heart as I have, you would not have wondered that I turned from the gay scene to the dim solitude of my room, to weep bitter tears for my own blighted hopes, and to tremble with fear for the moral safety of one dearer than my own life."

"Why, Aunt, dearest Aunt, how seriously you talk. Surely you do not think I shall ever become a drunkard! What harm can there be in taking a glass of wine at a fashionable party with a young friend out of compliment?"

"Sidney, look at me. For fifteen years I have borne a seared and blighted heart. My sable robes have hung to me, a memento of past misery. I have tried to lay them aside and be gay, but I cannot; my cheek has become pale, my step prematurely subdued, and my eyes often dim with weeping. The glad song of girlhood was changed to the wail of sorrow, and I, in the spring of existence, in the hey-day of life, just exulting in the glory of living, was suddenly plunged into dense palpable darkness, through which light seldom shines. Sidney, for fifteen years the sun has not shone to me as it used to, the birds have not sung as in the olden glow of life. Nature has been an unmeaning blank, anguish has forbidden me to smile, and I have wept until it often seems as if I had no more tears to shed. Look at that picture opposite, you know it well, 'is the image of my only brother. It was painted when about your age. Did you ever see a fairer face? so noble and generous, and that tender earnest smile around the mouth. Oh! my brother, my brother, would to God I had died for you;" and, overcome by her emotion, she bowed her head and wept convulsively. "Sidney," she said, at length "you were named for him, and you are like him in disposition and appearance. I have watched over you ever since you were a little child, and have striven to have you escape the shoals on which he made such total wreck; and oh, Sidney, have I striven in vain? You are my only hope; if you fail me, life has no other joy. On you I hope to lean when I walk the down-hill of life. I need your tender love and sympathy. I cannot be robbed of this one treasure. In the loneliness of my chamber last night I wrestled with God and cried earnestly to him, that he would save you from present and eternal ruin. It is for this I shall tell you that part of the history of my brother that has hitherto been kept from you.

"My mother fell quietly asleep when I was born. Her mild blue eyes never looked on me; she closed them forever just as my first feeble wail sounded on her ears. They laid her away beneath the roses of June, and left her grave to minister to the wants of the little weeping frail thing thrown so suddenly on their care. There were two beside me, your mother, then rapidly advancing to womanhood, and Sydney, a rosy-cheeked laughing boy of three years. There were three little graves beside my mother's, and three dear little children older than he slept there. He was the last boy, the only one who had outlived the time of infancy. My father worshipped him. After my mother's death he became more fond of him than ever. He would scarcely suffer him from his sight. He watched over him, fearful lest the dread destroyer might bear him away on his shadowy wings, and he should go to make another grave by the little green mounds in the old church-yard. But his fears were ungrounded; he reached his twelfth year a healthy, happy, rosy boy. About that time your mother married and quitted the dear old Hall, to live many miles away, happy, however, with the man of her choice. My father was very wealthy, and, at the time of my mother's death, had retired from business that he might have more time to devote to us. He undertook our education—being himself a classical scholar, we found in him the best of teachers. So jealous was he lest we might imbibe some injurious principles that he would neither employ tutor nor governess! Oh! Sidney, those happy childhood hours, how the memory of them comes over me like a soothing balm!

"On the hill, at a little distance from our house, stood the elegant residence of a widow lady of some fortune. Mrs Morrison had two children, a son and a daughter. She was a distant relative of my mother's, so we were very intimate. Philip and Alice often spent their mornings with us, reciting, studying, or reading some of the glorious works of the old authors, until our ardent young hearts would be all afire at the lofty deeds of heroism, or the mournful lays of tenderness would melt us into tears. We all had fine voices, and in the quiet gloaming we would sing sweet old ballads, or listen to our father as he played on the deep-toned organ, the divine compositions of Mozart or Handel. One mind moulded ours,—we were alike in thought and sentiment. Alice was fair, gentle, and quiet, but always happy. Philip was brave, generous, and tender, like Sidney, easily influenced for good or evil. The days of our childhood and early youth passed away like a happy dream. Our mornings were spent in study—our afternoons in reading, drawing, or music,—and in the quiet summer evenings we would wander in the garden, or extend our walks still farther, and roam at will over the green meadows and beautiful hills that lay stretched around us, like the Garden of Paradise, to our enthusiastic, ardent natures. And so the stream of our lives flowed calmly, evenly on, until Sidney had reached his eighteenth year, and I my fifteenth, when a change came. The first light of "love's young dream" dawned sweetly upon us, almost unconsciously. I found I was only happy in Philip's society, and Sidney sought oftener the sweet smile of Alice. I was happy, too happy, a crowning glory had settled upon my peaceful life. I asked for no greater bliss. Ah! why could not those days of unbroken joy have lasted longer? why were they changed so soon for years of bitter anguish?"

"Sidney's nineteenth birthday was a day of sorrow. The next morning he was to leave home, in company with Philip, for college. To spend a year away from them seemed like an eternity. Oh! what bitter tears I wept when I knew they must go, for I felt that the old joys could never return. I knew that a year's intercourse with fashionable society must change them. Well, the last evening came, and Philip and I stood together in the dim old library, exchanging our vows of eternal constancy. I saw his dark, earnest eyes bent full upon me, and I heard his words of tenderness in the inmost depths of my soul. Oh, how I loved him! It was idolatry, and God punished me. I caught the gleams of Alice's white robes as she and Sydney walked through the garden, and when, a few moments after, we joined them, I knew by the pale sweet face that she was betrothed. The moon shone through fleecy clouds softly upon us, the night-birds sang their saddest songs, and the wind moaned mournfully through the trees, as we returned with full hearts to the house. I cannot linger over that

parting; it brings the past too vividly to my mind. It is enough to say they went, and it seemed for weeks as if every joy had gone with them. We could not enjoy our walks, our books were laid aside, and music had lost its charm; but gradually, as time wore on, and we received letters from the absent telling of their happiness and enjoyment, of the novelty around them, we returned to our old pursuits.

"Half of the year had passed when Mrs Morrison was taken suddenly ill. The best medical skill was procured, but all in vain. After a few weeks of extreme suffering, she rested on the bosom of Jesus, and Alice was an orphan. After the funeral was over, the great white house on the hill was closed, and the lonely mourning girl came to live with us until Philip's return. It was my melancholy duty to acquaint him of his mother's death, and his mournful letter in answer told how tenderly that mother had been loved, and of his deep and heart-felt sorrow that he had not been with her to have received her dying blessing. Well, the year passed and they returned. Philip, pale and sorrowful, folded me in his arms, and Sidney fervently kissed the pale cheek of Alice. They were happy to be home once more, they said, though it was only for a short time, for in a few weeks they must return to their college-life for another year. My heart died within me. I tried to be happy, but could not. I saw too plainly they had changed. The purity of their souls had been sullied by contact with the world; they had not returned as they went. Our simple pleasures had not the relish they once had, they longed for something more exciting, and so they left the peaceful shades of the dear old elms, and our heartfelt love, for the busy city and their gay companions. A year passed away, and they did not return. Sidney's frequent applications for money seemed to arouse my father's suspicions. He became peevish and fretful, and it was evident a feeble old age was fast coming upon him. Alice, too, did not seem as well as usual; a slight cough, attended by a pain in her side, alarmed me greatly. And I knew that Sidney's apparent neglect did not administer much either to her health or happiness. Yet she never complained, and I kept my grief closely locked in my own heart. I could not bear to add a feather's weight to her fears.

"The summer passed away drearily enough to me, and when the autumn days grew short and dark, they returned, just in time, however, to accompany Alice and I to the city of B—, where she had been ordered for better medical attendance. I left my father with feelings of regret, but the dear old man loved Alice so tenderly, and knew that I was so necessary to her happiness, that he readily agreed to anything that would be for her advantage. The novelty of spending the winter in the city, and the prospect of its benefitting Alice, made me more hopeful and happy than I had been for some time. I hoped I could win Philip and Sidney back. I presumptuously thought I could break the chain of evil influences that surrounded them. I trusted in my own strength, and, alas! I found too late it was a broken reed to lean upon.

"Plunged in the dissipation of a fashionable city, I found what little restraint we exercised was soon swept away by the ruthless hand of worldly folly; yet were Philip and Sidney as dearly loved as ever. Our hearts were not changed. Such love as ours knew no change. Night by night I would sit by the couch where Alice lay, pale and languid, while Philip and Sidney spent the hours in the ball-room, at the opera, and theatre, and, alas! too often at the gaming table. I tried not to complain. I tried to win them to other enjoyments by kind words and gentle smiles. I hid my sorrow from them, that I might not make them unhappy when in my presence, but there were hours when the old-time happiness would come to us again, quiet morning hours, when, weary with the previous night's dissipation, they would seek the room of the invalid to wile away the time, and often an old song that we used to sing together, or a loving word, would cause my heart to beat hopefully.

"Dear Alice, she faded away gently and quietly; she suffered very little, but it was evident to me she would not long need earthly physicians. Sidney did not believe it, he continually assured himself she would be better when the spring came, and the roses bloomed; dear angel, she was better.

"Philip would say, 'Ally, dear, we will all go to Italy next year, and the balmy climate will bring back the roses to your cheek. We will all be happy