

At Whose Door?

(By Mrs. Harvie Jellie.)

'Have you heard about James Giffard? I knew he would give way again. What a disgrace to the Church! said Mrs. Alton, one of the oldest members of the community.

'Dear me! you don't mean to say he has fallen into drinking again. I always said he ought not to have been admitted into the Church so quickly,—and his poor wife so delicate, and such a handful of children,' and the Colonel's wife assumed an expression of extreme pain.

'It's all too true, and there's another one I rather suspect, and I think our people are too ready to admit such into positions of trust, on signing the pledge and professing to be converted. We shall see, I'm keeping my eyes on him,' said Mrs. Alton, sipping her tea, and looking the impersonation of judgment.

Meantime, the man in question—James Giffard—was standing before the fire in his dining room, his head resting on the arm on the mantel shelf. A great pain was in his heart. As a young man, he started well in a London office, but the tide of evil swept past and carried him off his feet, temptations were subtle and many, and his easy and happy nature fell into the snares which a stronger one might avoid. One step led to another, and James was soon fairly on the road to ruin. His young wife pleaded in vain. Sometimes he kept his promise, and refused to stay away at the club; then she had hope, alas! only to be crushed by fresh outbreaks of drinking.

But one evening he returned to find his little boy very ill, and on that boy his heart was set. He would let him say to him what no one else dare say, and when he bent over the bed to look at Charlie, the child started: 'Don't come now, father, I smell the drink that makes you cruel to mother and me, you make me hate it so, do go away—away,' and Charlie turned his face to the wall.

On his bed that night James Giffard knew the stings of conscience. Self gratification was ruining love and home—his child recoiled from him in disgust—his wife was worn by inward grief, and disappointment, and he loathed himself, and groaned within himself to be free.

Next morning in clear and sober distress he approached the boy. 'Charlie, you'll speak to me now, laddie,' he said, taking his hand.

'If you say you'll give it up, father, and not make mother cry again,' and the bright eyes full of fever flashed their earnest gaze upon the man who loved that boy with all his heart.

'Laddie, when you say your prayers ask God to help me, for I mean it. I will keep from it, it makes a brute of me, only if I taste it, all my power to resist fails.'

'Father, I learned at school a verse that says: "A bruised reed shall he not break," and teacher said, "God is kind, and knows our weakness," won't he be kind to you?'

And the words of the child pierced the father's heart, and he sobbed aloud and vowed he would keep out of temptation's way, and as his boy passed away he said: 'Father, you'll make mother happy, won't you?' and the stricken man said: 'Yes, Charlie, and I'll keep out of reach of danger.'

A year had gone, and the heart tried by sorrow had turned to its God for comfort, and sought forgiveness at the Saviour's cross, and James Giffard keeping his promise to his boy, avoided the company of those who offered him that which was fire to fuel, and sought the communion of those who professed to be Christ's disciples. With them surely he would be in safe guard.

After deep penitence and prayer for guidance, he yielded to his wife's persuasion to join her in confessing his love to Christ, by openly acknowledging himself on the Lord's side.

Many in the Church had looked with critical eyes as he sat with them at the communion.

Three times a shudder as of nearing harm passed through his being, as he on each occasion sipped once more the fatal wine, but on the fourth time he was perhaps less able to resist the flavor, something of de-

pression as he thought of the boy had lowered him, and although he had united with the congregation in praying 'Lead us not into temptation,' he tasted once more (as with those who had no sympathy with his weakness, he, sat in communion), the very thing he had declared he never would touch. Leaving the church that day, he fell into the snare thus unwittingly laid open to him, and shaken in heart after the first fall from his Christian profession, he stood there by the fireside in heartfelt grief.

The door opened, and a pale face looked at him, as only wounded love can look. He met the glance in silence, and beckoned her to his side.

'What are they saying, wife?'

'Saying! James! Oh, what can they say? A member of the Church, too!' and she covered her face and wept.

'I know, I hear the cruel, uncharitable speeches; I feel the looks they give, when they ought to say: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves," they would say "keep away, touch not, taste not," and then themselves put before me the very thing they condemn. Wife, let me fall into the hands of God, but save me from the Church's criticism.'

Wounded by remarks, repelled by unsympathetic counsel, the spirit of James Giffard recoiled, and for some months he seemed to hover between the remembrance of his promise to Charlie, and the temptation once more awakened.

The uncharitable estimate of many besides the Colonel's wife and Mrs. Alton caused him to keep away from the Church, and no kindly hand was outstretched to uplift, and none apologized for putting before a weak one, that which they would condemn him for touching elsewhere.

The words of his boy, and the verse, 'A bruised reed shall he not break,' held him above despair, and he turned from the judgment of the disciples, to the compassion of the Lord, and grace was given in time of need.

'I well nigh lost my footing, wife,' he said six months later, 'no thanks to the Church! alas, for the rarity of Christian charity, unto God be the praise,' and James Giffard became the means of helping the fallen, and encouraging the tried ones.

Workers with Christ, he and his wife became powerful to save and bless.

In cases like this, where one has come out of the clutches of strong temptation and wants to avoid the taste of that which inflames the passion for drink—at whose door will the blame lie, when a soul is thrown back into the power of evil which may become too mighty?

Should we not deal gently with the erring, and lay no stumbling block in their way? for well we know our Lord and Master will hold us responsible, and may be, while we think in this respect we are not our brother's keeper, he will say: 'The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the ground.'—'Temperance Record.'

Temperance Notes.

A visitor to the Richmond, Va., tobacco factories tells graphically of the methods there used. 'The tobacco leaves are laid upon the floor, often a very dirty one, and a Negro man with bare feet walks back and forth over them, sprinkling them with the flavoring, and, as he says, "Stomping it wid dese two foots." Meanwhile he chews tobacco and adds its juice to the flavoring.'—'Pacific Ensign.'

Dr. Norman Kerr, president of the Society for the Suppression of Inebriety, who was one of the first witnesses before the Royal Commission on Licensing, is a graduate of Glasgow University, and shortly after receiving his diploma in the sixties sailed as surgeon on board the Allan Line of steamers, and was known throughout the fleet on account of his staunch temperance principles, as the 'teetotal doctor.' Dr. Kerr subsequently settled in London, and is the author of numerous publications, including a great work on 'Etiology.'

'In connection with my work I have given considerable attention to the effect of the use of tobacco upon young boys; and am satisfied that its use has a blighting effect upon their mental, moral, and physical growth.'

—Robert O. Moody, General Secretary Y. M. C. A., Stamford, Conn.

'I never observed such pallid faces, and so many marks of declining health, nor even knew so many hectic habits and consumptive affections as of late years, and I trace this alarming inroad on young constitutions principally to the pernicious custom of smoking cigars.'—Dr. Waterhouse.

We have referred, says the Chicago 'Standard,' more than once to the desperate and despicable measures resorted to by some representatives of the tobacco manufacturers to develop a taste for tobacco in growing boys, in order to keep up the demand. The opposition which the anti-cigarette reformers have had to meet is not less underhanded and ingenious than that displayed by the advocates of the saloon. A recent phase of the campaign is the manufacture and sale of a variety of chewing gum containing nicotine. It has been very popular with Chicago school children since its introduction. On complaints by parents and teachers the health department recently analyzed the gum, pronounced it dangerous to health, and ordered its sale stopped. This latest invention is worthy to be placed along with the brandy and whiskey candies as an example of the admirable ethical principles characteristic of these twin industries, the liquor business and the cigarette business. Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the use of tobacco and liquor by adults, we never heard of any reputable physician or scientist who did not pronounce them highly injurious to children.

Correspondence

Dear Editor,—I take the 'Messenger' and like it very much. Papa has a team of black horses. My pets are a little white dog, named 'Rags,' an Angora cat, named 'Velvet,' and a pony named 'Beauty.' I have a bicycle. My birthday comes on Dec. 25. I have no brothers or sisters. Mamma is at California for her health. I go to the mountains every vacation, and stay one month. Papa is a doctor but he does not practice in the winter time. I go to the high school and will be in the eighth grade this winter. We live in New York in the winter and board in the summer. I have never written to the 'Messenger' before. Yours truly,
HARRIET F.

In that stillness.
Dear Editor,—I have just been reading your blessed paper, which gives me very much pleasure, indeed. I live on Sea Island, B.C., with my brother and his wife. I am fishing just now out on the Gulf of Georgia. There are five thousand boats on this rolling water fishing for the canneries. Each boat has with it two men and one net. These nets are nine hundred feet long by fifteen and twenty feet in depth. And, do you believe me, Dear Editor, each boat carries on its mast a lantern, and when night comes on all the lanterns are lit up. It is then you would compare the Gulf to that of a beautiful city lit up with electric lights. And while we are thus fishing,

The sun goes up.
And the sun goes down,
And the sunshine follows the rain.
And yesterday's sneers,
And yesterday's frowns
Can never come over again,
While resting at the mouth of the
Fraser River,
Farewell, dear friends, farewell.
F. W. H.

Letters have also been received from the following writers:—Pearlie Collins, Petrolia, Ont.; Daisy Keyes, Elmsdale; William E., Albemarle, B.C.; Laura W., Arthur, Ont.; Hugh McLean, Menands Albany, N. Y.; Irene Werry, Crystal City; Gladys S. Dowling, Scotch Ridge; Martie H., Forked River; Ernest Thompson, Chance Harbour, St. John, N.B.; Maud Thompson, Chance Harbour, St. John, N.B.; Jane C. McCleod, Loch Lomond, Cape Breton, N. S.; Victor R. B., Lourville; Stella D., Treadwell, Ont.; Alma S. C., Dauphin, Mass.; Nettie Pollitt, Collingwood, Ont.; Lawrence Dalton E., Pleasant Vale, N.B.; Annie Margaret M., Ascot; Mable F., Ospringle; G. L. McG., Ashdod; Nettie Young, Port Daniel; Amy E. Ansel, Toronto, Ont.; Lizzie H., Keady, P. Q.