

THE CANADA TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE,

DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE & NEWS.

PLEDGE.--We, the undersigned, do agree, that we will not use Intoxicating Liquors as a Beverage, nor Traffic in them; that we will not provide them as an article of Entertainment, nor for persons in our Employment; and that in all suitable ways we will discountenance their use throughout the community.

VOL. XVIII.]

MONTREAL, MARCH 1, 1852.

No. 6

The Pledge.—Chapter V.

Although Mary Arlington was kindly received by her uncle and his family, the change made her feel unhappy; and she understood well that this was in consequence of her absence from James, and the prospect of seeing him but rarely, if at all, for the future. The cause of her removal, at so short a notice, from Newark, she did not understand, and she had many conjectures on the subject. But a suspicion of the real truth did not cross her mind. Her daily thought was of James, and she would lie awake at night for hours with his image in her mind. The separation of the young man and maiden, was the very way to render permanent any impressions which their hearts might have received, and this the uncle ought to have known, and would have known, if he had given the subject proper reflection.

Mary had been in New York for nearly a week, when her uncle brought her a letter. Mr. Arlington had not broken the seal, although he had debated for some hours the propriety of doing so; as the post mark was Newaik, he more than suspected the writer of it to be young Latimer. When Mary received the letter, her uncle noticed that her face suddenly lightened up. She retired with it to her chamber immediately.

The young girl had been away only a few minutes, when she came bounding back into the room where her uncle and aunt were sitting, with the open letter in her hand, and tears of irreplaceable joy upon her cheeks.

"Read that! read that!" she exclaimed, thrusting the letter towards her uncle, and then sinking down by her aunt, and hiding her weeping face in her lap. Mr. Arlington read aloud:—

"DEAR MARY:—I have done as I promised to do. On the evening of the very day you left, I went out in search of your father, and happily found him. He was exhausted from want of food, and the absence, through lack of money to obtain it, of his accustomed stimulus. I bought him a good supper, and the hot coffee warmed and sustained him better than liquor. Then, through earnest persuasion, I got him to our Monday night meeting, where he signed the pledge, and he is now, thank Heaven, in his right mind. Mr. Seymour has been very kind to him. He gave him clothes, took him into his house, and, although not really in want of another journeyman, gave him work in the shop. I told your father that I was going to write to you. He sends his love to you, and to your uncle and aunt; and hopes you will forgive him for all the wretchedness you have suffered on his account. He says he wishes that you were only here. And I am sure I do. I am certain your presence would be a great help to your father. Ask your uncle if he does not think so."

"And now good by, Mary. I will hope to see you soon."

"JAMES LATIMER."

The voice of Mr. Arlington failed several times as he read this gladdened letter; and when he had finished it, he got up and walked about the room for some moments, struggling to keep down his feelings. When he had regained his self-possession, he went to his niece and raising her up from where she was lying with her face still buried in the lap of her aunt, kissed her tenderly, and said—

"Yes, dear, James is right. You had better go back. Your presence will be everything to your father. Can you get ready to return in the afternoon's boat?"

"I am ready to go at a moment's notice," replied Mary, in a quick voice.

Then, as if conscious that there was, in her manner, a too evident wish to leave the family of her uncle and aunt, she added—

"Not that I do not feel your kindness; but ought I to be away from my father now?"

"No, Mary, not for a day. He needs all the sustaining power we can give him."

After Mr. Arlington signed the pledge, James Latimer managed to keep near him all the while. When work was done in the evening, he would devise some means of interesting him, and he found the easiest way to do so, was to read aloud temperance stories, or the doings of temperance men as recorded in the newspapers devoted to the cause. Often would the unhappy man, in whose bosom conscience was doing its reforming work, weep over the recital of incidents so like those that had occurred in his own life, that he could hardly persuade himself that he was not pointed at in the story.

James had come home from his work, in company with Mr. Arlington, on the day after he wrote to Mary, and they were sitting together and talking, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and in bounded the very one of whom they were just speaking.

"Mary!" exclaimed both Mr. Arlington and James at the same instant.

In a moment the happy girl was in her father's arms. James, with an instinctive feeling of delicacy, withdrew and left them alone.

It was soon understood in the house that Mary had come back to remain, and it was pleasant news to all. Mr. and Mrs. Seymour could not have given their own child a more cordial welcome home. And as for James Latimer, his efforts to conceal his delight were so poorly successful that his true feelings were hidden from no one.

The mother of Mary Arlington had been compelled, three years before, to go home to her friends in New-Brunswick, where she was now residing. Two young children were with her. She had borne want, neglect, ill-treatment, and all manner of privation, until health and spirits failed, and she was taken away from her brutalized and unfeeling husband, almost by force. Since that time, he often came where she was, saddening her heart with his presence. Sometimes he came only to vent upon her his drunken abuse, and sometimes to get money from her to gratify his insatiate appetite.

Two months from the time of his reformation, of which fact no word had reached the ears of Mrs. Arlington, for it had been purposely concealed from her, the dejected wife and mother was sitting with her youngest child, a boy five years old, on her lap, and a daughter ten years old, standing by her chair and leaning against her, when a well dressed man opened the door and stepped in. Several moments passed, and still Mrs. Arlington looked earnestly at him, but without speaking.

"Don't you know me, Mary?"

The voice swept all doubt away, and with a cry of joy the wife sprang forward and threw herself into the arms of her husband.

"Dear Mary!" said Arlington, disengaging himself from the clinging embrace of his wife, and kissing first one child and then the other. "All is well. Two months have passed since I signed the pledge, and I have been at work for Mr. Seymour ever since."

"Heavenly Father! I thank thee!" murmured the wife, with