

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.

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The Half Orphans.

This term is generally applied to children who have lost either father or mother, by death, and there are some very excellent charitable institutions in this city where such children are taken in and provided for in infancy, and assisted to good situations in youth, so that they may not grow up as such numbers do, to be mere street vagabonds, uncared for by everybody, almost hated by all, friends to none, perfect Ishmaelites.

Orphans, according to Webster, are children who are bereaved of parents. "Bereaved. Deprived of, stripped and left destitute."

Then we have a great many orphans, who are not made so by death. They are deprived of parents, stripped, and left destitute, more than if both father and mother, or either of them were dead, for then some of our great and good charitable institutions would receive them with open arms.

The most destitute orphans are those who are bereaved of parents by the great licensed orphan maker—the rum seller—of this city: Perhaps the most proper title for these would be "half orphans," for such they really are.

Of two of these we have a little story. Only in one circumstance is it different from a thousand others. Happily for this class of half orphans, there is one institution where they find a home—where no questions are asked what made them so; only "are you destitute?"—then come and share the food and shelter provided by those

"Who have a heart to feel for others' woes."

During one of our visits to this institution, while sitting with the family of the Superintendent, a couple of beautiful little flaxen haired girls, perhaps four and six years old, came running into the parlor to kiss Mrs. Pease, and say good night. Three years ago such a scene in this very room would have been the eighth wonder of the world. Then it was the home of the filthy, wretched, vicious and miserable, where half orphans were made; now it is the home of peace, hope, love and charity, to the bereaved and destitute.

We were interested at once in these sweet little children, and enquired "how came they here—who are they—where from?"—for evidently they are not of the ordinary Five Points class."

"I can tell you nothing about them," said Mrs. Pease, "or very little. A few days ago the door-keeper came up very early one morning, and said two gentlemen wished to see me. One was so in dress and address; the other only so in the latter. His face and clothes told of what makes orphans. 'Sir,' said the first, 'I have lately read some highly interesting stories, published in *The Tribune*, in which for the first time I have learned the existence of the Five Points House of Industry, and its benevolent objects, and we have called to make some personal inquiry. This gentleman has need of some assistance.'"

"What is the case?"

"I have," said he, "two little girls, who have no mother to take care of them; I might say no father either," said he aside, as he turned to wipe away an unbidden bitter tear. "I cannot tell you the whole story."

"You need not. We never inquire in this house about the past. No one is allowed to inquire what an inmate has been—only what they may be. To reform those who have been bad, the past must be forgotten. We hope all who enter here, begin a new life."

"Oh!" said he, "what a blessed idea. If I could only forget the past—the time when I was a Broadway merchant, and drank my bottle of wine at dinner—when I lived in all the domestic felicity of a happy home, with a virtuous wife and two sweet children, I might forget that I have no home now—that I am bid by my unpaid landlady to take my brats away—that I must clear out this very day—that I never can have another mouthful in her house. Oh! can I ever forget that I have fallen so low as to beg charity for my worse than motherless children."

"Then their mother is living?"

"I do not know. I have not seen her for a year. I have heard of her, not long ago, but she is not fit to be a mother to two such children. She left me, and her two little girls, for a life of drunkenness and misery. She is worse than dead to them. I need not tell you what I am. If you will take my children and take care of them, I will go and bring them directly. I have nothing to give, but I hope those who have, will increase their charity enough to keep my poor children from starving."

"Have they no relation who would take care of them?"

"Relations? Yes, sir; among the rich and the proud of the city. I, too, am proud, if I am degraded. I can bear degradation, but I could not bear to think my children were the paupers of my own brother, or any relative who would remind them of their degraded father, or tell them, perhaps, as they met a ragged woman staggering through the streets, 'that is your mother.' Never, sir, never."

"Well, well, bring them here. You need not tell your name or theirs. Only promise me one thing; that you will reform yourself, or, at least, try to do it, so that you can once more be a father to your children."

"I intend to, or never see them again. They never shall be ashamed of a drunken father. They never will know their mother. She does not know where they are, nor never will know. I will leave the city to-day. I intend to get away from old associates, and out of sight of the ever open places of temptation that do nothing but drag me down."

So he went away and brought the two children, pressed them to his bosom, shed tears over them, called upon God to bless them and those who took care of them, said good-bye, and went away with a tear in his eye, and a prayer in his heart, and nothing has been heard of him since.

We became much interested in these two "half orphans," and noticed them as the pets of the missionary family, in