



Temperance Department.

AN ACCOUNT OF MY BROTHER

A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

Twenty-five years ago I had a brother whom I loved with sincere affection. He was the joy of our whole family, and our father's pride. Indeed, there were few such boys bright, manly, talented, of a fair and ruddy countenance, first in his classes, selected for his powers in declamation to grace anniversary and exhibition occasions, winning prizes and medals with ease, he was at the same time envied by his schoolfellows and praised by his superiors. I recollect one magnificent triumph—so it appeared to our boyish eyes—when, before an audience of two thousand applauding listeners, he carried off the highest honors from a school of two hundred and upwards.

He entered college at an early age, and bore himself to the front rank of his classes. He was not only bright—he was also a hard-working student. When a junior at college, he and I were together at a teaparty. His wit and repartee, his keen satires, his varied and yet modest stores of invention, made him the centre of an admiring circle. At table, he sat opposite to me. Nellie Brice, a beautiful and accomplished girl—a girl whom he loved with his whole soul—sat next him. The wine was passed. But, as he was strictly temperate in his habits, he allowed it to pass.

"Surely," she said, touching his hand "you will take wine?"

"No, I thank you, it is against my principles."

With her own hands she filled his glass. "Surely," she said, "you will take it from me?"

He faltered.

"What," she asked, leaning fondly toward him, "will you not take this glass from me? If you love me, you will drink with me?"

He put it to his lips and drank it off hurriedly. It was his first glass. Would to God it had been his last. But it was not his last even on that evening. Before the midnight hour he drank so deeply that even Nellie spurned his maudlin affection, and others had to help him home.

It was only a year after that, that he left home for ever. He felt so keenly the disgrace of his fall that he turned to other and worse society. He was led into an unfortunate encounter with the police while still a student, and to save open shame left his home at midnight.

I heard of him afterwards as captain of a Mississippi steamer. He had risen to this position of confidence, notwithstanding his increasing thirst for liquor. Indeed, he seems to have controlled his appetite for a while. But in an evil hour he fell again, and lost his position in consequence.

I heard of him next in government employ. He was engaged in carrying the mails across the plains of California. It was then a dangerous and difficult work. For a year or two the new life seemed to read him from his old habits. But it was not of long duration. During a heavy debauch the Indians swooped down upon his camp, destroyed his horses and teams, and left him for dead.

This adventure seemed to have a sobering effect. For a while a better spirit was in him. He returned to the habits of man, and entered upon a career of usefulness as a lawyer. Then came the fierce civil war. His lot was cast with the North, mine with the South. I heard of him but seldom. Once, through a stray Northern paper, I heard that he was a Brigadier-General, and had been engaged in some brave and daring feat. I heard of him only once afterward during the war. He had been cashiered for drunkenness.

Then the war ended. He moved beyond the Mississippi to one of the new states, and resumed the practice of his profession. He was now married and four precious children, as pledges given to fortune, seemed to bind him to sobriety. Besides this, he was rising in the estimation of his fellow-citizens. First, he held some important county office, then he was elected to the Legislature, and almost any office he aspired to seemed within his grasp. A year or two passed. Our correspondence lullied. I next heard of him as driven out of a barroom and kicked into the street for disorderly conduct.

I have two letters from his noble-hearted wife, lying before me. In one she says "O brother, I am heartbroken. My husband is gone—I do not know where he is. Our last penny was squandered by him for drink. Time after time have I labored to extricate

him from difficulties. My own patrimony has all gone in that direction. And now he has fled for fear of prison, leaving his wife and children helpless and desolate."

In the other she says:

"I heard three days since that my husband on his way home was taken sick, and lay dying twenty miles away. At once I went to him. But he did not know me. I mentioned your name, but it created no emotion. I found him sick unto death. Would to God it had been some other kind of sickness. Oh, my brother—he is dead! and he died of delirium tremens!"

I received this letter, last night.

So have I given you a plain, unvarnished account of my brother's living and dying. It is not an uncommon history. Many a one of your readers will recognize some kinship in the statement to records in their own experience.

I draw a long breath and sigh as I write these words. I cry out, "O Lord, how long!"

Does the destroyer waste for ever? Is there no end to such histories as this?

No, there is not. Coolly, calmly I write it. I write it with suppressed bitterness. No, there is not, so long as tables of refinement must needs be garnished with the wine-cup and fair girls press their unsuspecting victims to drink.

I have just returned from the meeting of our Synod. I had a host who entertained with all kindness. He had wine on his table. He pressed even his ministerial guests to take of it. And some drank.

Last week I saw a young girl offer wine to her brother to drink. She laughed at his scruples for hesitating. He drank, and I noticed that one glass was not enough.

And so the destroyer will go on wasting for ever!—*Christian Worker*

ALCOHOL AS A DRUG

The real indicator of temperance progress fundamentally considered, is the tone of the medical journals, which reflect, though often at some distance, the most advanced lights of physiological truth in relation to alcohol. Among these the *British Medical Journal* stands honorably distinguished for its general sympathy with temperance reform, and for its readiness to respond to and reflect the newest results of alcoholic investigation. It was among the first and heartiest to do justice to the Parisian experiments of 1860, and to avow its conviction that the time had come when the conclusion must be accepted without further procrastination or evasion, that alcohol is no benefactor to the human system, but a mischievous intruder, which, accordingly, the organism sets itself tooth and nail to oppose, and if its powers suffice, to expel.

We find in a recent issue some significant deliverances on the value of alcohol, even as a drug. "M.D., Lond.," referring to the letter of a previous correspondent that appeared in its pages some weeks before, moots the question as to the real secret of what virtue may lie in bitter beer. "What scientific proof is there," he asks, "that the improvement in the case referred to was due to the alcohol in the Burton ale, and not to the infusion of hop?" This is a fair question, seeing that "every medical man knows the value of bitter infusions in atonic dyspepsia,"—that is, in indigestion arising from impaired tone of the stomach. If virtue does lie in the hop to restore tone to the organ, it is not teetotalism, as the writer justly remarks, that will condemn its use for this end. But on purely medical grounds it will still remain a question, which it will be for professional men to determine, whether the benefit thus lent is not counterbalanced by the evil that accompanies it. Whether it acts as an anesthetic on the nerves of sensation, and thus allays unpleasant sensations in the stomach, or as a temporary local irritant to determine the blood to it, as mustard and pepper do, the benefit thus accruing is realized at some expense. Such a "hyper-irritant action" is not needless in ordinary cases for digestion, and if carried beyond certain very circumscribed limits "is apt to produce chronic congestion of the stomach and liver." Whatever good, however, may lie in the vaunted beverage is probably confined to this tone-imparting quality of the hop, and is by no means unmixable. But if otherwise,—if the alcohol in the ale is also to be credited with some little virtue, let this be fairly made out, and no sensible abstainer will oppose its wise administration as a drug.

But the grievance is, that these alcoholic fluids are too often resorted to, and even prescribed at random, which sends our London M.D. into the following line of judicious and in part facetious observation: "All medicinal uses of alcohol are legitimate, but ought to be under the control of the profession. The outcry of teetotalers against its medical use is simply because medical men will persist in ordering all kinds of mixtures, and in sending the patient to the public-house or wine-merchant to obtain them. It is *petite justice*"

to adduce the text 'which maketh glad the heart of man' in proof of Divine approval of mild intoxication, as though no property of grapes or unfermented wine can cheer or cause gladness. Corn, 'the harvest, vide Harvest Home,' shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine' (Feb. *trava*, the vintage fruit) 'the maids.' A Scotch minister is said to have been much puzzled by this verse. He said he could understand how new wine (if intoxicating) could make the young women cheerful, but could only account for corn having the same effect on the supposition that it stood for 'whisky, y.'"

It is with peculiar pleasure that we cite from the same *British Medical Journal* the following yet more explicit testimony in favor of the great fundamental principles of our movement. It also is the testimony of a professional authority,—another M.D.,—who subscribes himself "Another Physician," and the experience he narrates in his own. He says:—

"When a young man I was very delicate, and from nineteen to twenty-three years old seldom free from some ailment, due to general weakness. As I was a firm teetotaler, my convictions became a source of dispute with my friends, and, under the orders of two medical advisers, I sacrificed my own preference by taking a daily quantum of sherry, and subsequently I was in the habit, until the summer of 1875, of swallowing my dose of beer or wine with each day's dinner. So far, however, from being secured by this in the enjoyment of health, I have always had excessive sensitiveness to atmospheric changes, and have again and again been laid up for two or three weeks at a time. Two years and a quarter since I resolved to drink nothing stronger than good filtered water, except a morning and evening cup of tea. The result is that indigestion, headache, sleeplessness, and fear of weather are all things of the past. Not only have I had splendid health, but now, at fifty-four years of age, I have more energy than I had at thirty, and I can do a day or a night's work, or a succession of them, with any man you please."

ALCOHOL BY THE TEASPOONFUL.

At a public meeting recently called in Manchester for the purpose of hearing addresses from members of the British Medical Association, then meeting in that city, Dr Norman Kerr, of London, made the following remarks.

If the people of Great Britain would insist on practicing abstinence and procuring, as he hoped and prayed they would, the suppression of the whole liquor traffic, either by a Maine law or the very reasonable and just Permissive Bill, they must make up their mind when proposing to compensate publicans that the poor frozen-out doctors and their families must be compensated too. Alcohol, all admitted, was a rank poison, poisoning at one fell blow both body and mind. Few, however, seemed to be aware of the large quantities of this poison consumed in our ordinary intoxicating beverages. In every pint of claret there were 2oz. of alcohol, in every pint of port or sherry 4oz., in every pint of London stout 1½oz., in every pint of brandy 10oz., and in every pint of rum 15oz. Two table-spoonfuls of alcohol were recorded to have killed a child seven years old, therefore a pint of "nourishing stout" contained more poison than had been known to kill a child seven years old; a pint of claret as much as would kill two such children; a pint of port or sherry, four a pint of brandy, ten and a pint of rum, fifteen children. All our alcoholic drinks were mainly watery solutions of the poison-alcohol, and the dilution with water never altered the nature and influence of the poison, though of course diminishing the effect in proportion to the quantity taken. What ought we to expect from the daily "moderate" indulgence in even the weakest of such poisonous mixtures? Increase of disease and shortening of life. And so we found it. One insurance company had two sections, the one section for teetotal lives, and the other for moderate, careful, or limited drinkers. Nobody but teetotalers would have anything to do with drunkards, and they only to lift the drunkard out of his drunkenness, and the insurance companies would not have the intemperate at any price. In ten years 2,275 moderate were expected to die, and one less, or 2,274 did die; while of the teetotalers 1,272 were expected to die, but so obstinate were water drinkers, that only 922 did oblige them by dying. And all other comparisons of the duration of life between careful drinkers and abstainers in similar circumstances gave the same extraordinary result. One single glass of sherry compelled the heart to pump over an additional quantity of blood in the twenty-four hours of half a ton weight by solid measure. Again one glass of port or sherry occasioned an extraordinary excess of work to the heart, as shown by the increased number of the heart's pulsation, equivalent to the power to whom the heart belonged having to raise 2 of a ton weight one foot high. For himself he could only confess that his heart

had had quite enough to do during the last twenty-four hours, and he did think he would have been exceedingly unwise if he had added to the task it had naturally to undergo an extra burden equal to having to lift over 2 of a ton one little foot, for it might just happen, as not un seldom occurred, that "the light straw might have broken the camel's back." The great truth had now gone forth to the ends of the earth that wherever there was alcohol there was poison, and that it poisoned in exact proportion to the quantity of the poison consumed and the physical capacity of the consumer to resist the poisonous influence. He would not say that he would not prescribe alcohol, for he did; and in the course of about 30,000 cases of disease, of which he had notes, he had prescribed nearly as much as would fill three quarters of a pint bottle. These occasions were omorgencies, and the handiest alcoholic compound (for, alas, alcohol was everywhere at hand) was resorted to only till others as potent, as prompt, but not so dangerous remedies could be procured. He and he alone was responsible for the treatment of his patients, at the bedside of the sick he allowed no one to interfere with him, caring as little for the denunciation of a drunkard as for the execution of a drunkard, but it did seem to him clear as the light of day that, in view of the enormous amount of moral, spiritual, political, and social evil that arose in this country from the use of intoxicating liquors, and seeing that it was known that even where alcohol had been prescribed with the utmost care and conscientiousness, medical prescriptions had been the means, in spite of the physician, of mental and moral wreck and ruin to many a patient, medical men were called upon never to use such a dangerous remedy, so liable to be followed by so serious consequences, unless it was absolutely and imperatively called for. Further, when its administration was unavoidable, alcohol should be prescribed in the same manner and with as much precision as any other deadly narcotic poison, the dose being accurately defined to be given in so many drops or at least by the teaspoonful on the distinct understanding that the physic be not continued unless the prescription be renewed. So risky and dangerous did he regard alcoholic liquors that when he could reasonably avoid using them he preferred to administer them himself. He had the honor of reading a paper on the preceding day at the British Medical meeting on that burning question of the medical world "The cause and cure of habitual drunkenness," and there was a matter with reference to this question which he felt it his duty to bring before them. He would not have ventured to introduce this at a public meeting had he not first brought it forward amongst his medical brethren. With some reformed drunkards the craving died gradually away, but with most the old longing never wholly left them, and no rescued inebriate could ever safely taste of the intoxicating cup. He had known most distressing instances of reformed drunkards lapsing into their old sinful indulgence and misery from the lurking drink fiend within being roused to renewed life on the stimulus of a single sip of weak alcoholic liquid on the occasion of a religious ordinance. He meddled not with the theological questions, but one thing he did hold, and the announcement of this declaration was received with unmistakable marks of approval at the medical sederunt, that medical men are all united, whether abstainers or non-abstainers, must insist that the cure of their reformed inebriates must not be counteracted and their safety endangered by the administration, on any religious or any other pretence, and however guarded and in however Christian a spirit, of any alcoholic liquor. If the fluids employed in religious ordinances made most of their ecclesiastical edifices unsafe, and, in fact, dangerous for the reformed drunkards, let them not blame the ministers of religion. The fault lay at the door of the medical profession, who ought long ago to have pointed out the absolute necessity for lifelong abstinence from all kinds and quantities of alcoholic drinks on the part of reformed inebriates, and he had not the slightest doubt that the moment the truth were proclaimed, as now it was in language that no one could misunderstand, this great reproach would be purged from the Christian Church. To sum up, moderate drinking shortened life, increased disease, rendered men weaker and more halting Christians, it made them less useful to their country, less happy in themselves, and of less honor and value to their families. Total abstinence, on the other hand, lessened disease, improved health, and lengthened life. By the general adoption of this simple remedy, and by the legislative diminution and suppression of licensed public temptations to drinking, not only would the health, prosperity, and happiness of the whole people be promoted, but on the fair field of an abstaining nation the word of God would have free course and be glorified. He had much pleasure in moving, "That this meeting is of opinion the common use of alcohol is injurious in health, and should be prescribed with as much care as any other drug."