



'Be of Good Cheer.'

(Jessie Forsyth.)

'The Lord stood by him and said, Be of good cheer.'—Acts xxiii., 10.

'Be of good cheer!' I have no other message,
No better words to say, with tongue or pen,
Than those the Master uttered, as a presage
Of peace and comfort to the hearts of men.

'Be of good cheer!' to those who stood around
Him,
Wistful and yearning, torn 'twixt hope and
fear;

'Be of good cheer!' and he whose foes had
bound him,
In prison felt the inspiring Presence near.

'Be of good cheer!' 'tis thine to do the sowing,
Though thou mayst never see the promised
yield;

Yet toil thou on, in humble patience, knowing
The harvest, in due time, shall bless the
field.

'Be of good cheer!' what matters care and sor-
row

If thou canst look beyond them, and discern
The promise of an ever-nearing morrow
When all thy failure shall to victory turn?

'Be of good cheer!' so shall the joy thou know-
est

Unto new courage and new hope inspire
Those who toil with thee, and where'er thou
goest

Altars shall glow with a rekindled fire.

A Striking Lesson.

A man who lately came over from America told the writer that on board the steamer one of the passengers went up to another in the smoking-room and asked him to have a drink with him. The man thus invited continued reading a newspaper and made no reply. The other man again asked him to drink with him. No answer again. A third invitation was then given in these words: 'Sir, I have asked you in as friendly a way as possible to drink with me, and each time you went on with your reading, and had not the civility to answer me. Now I ask you for the third time if you will drink wine, whiskey or anything else with me?' The man then put aside his paper and answered very quietly: 'Do you see that glass, sir?' Well, if I were to take even a quarter of it, I could not leave off until I had drunk all the liquor on board. This is why I would not drink with you.' All present admired the man's self-control, and learned a striking lesson on the danger of putting temptation in a brother's way.—'The Quiver.'

The Causes of Pauperism.

A new official rule in England requires that the various Boards of Guardians in their annual returns to the Local Government Board shall in future give additional details with a view to showing the cause which has resulted in the pauperism of persons receiving relief. It has on many occasions been declared that three-fourths of the inmates of workhouses and pauper lunatic asylums owe their position to excessive drinking. Figures already in possession of the Local Government Board showing that drunken paupers cost the London ratepayers alone over \$5,000,000 a year will, it is believed, be confirmed by the new returns. Official statistics show that the yearly bill for maintaining the drunken insane of London amounts to \$100,000. In spite of expert testimony from Boards of Guardians, workhouse masters, and others, it is always being contended by Socialists that drink is not the cause of pauperism, but the effect. They even go further, they argue that if the workers became more temperate the labor market would be over-stocked and wages would

consequently be lowered. This is the teaching of not a few prominent Socialist leaders, many of whom, by the way, are themselves abstainers. If drinking increases wages and Temperance lowers them, then why these abstaining Socialists? Do they abstain because of the advantages they obtain over their more weaker brethren who drink? If so, that is scarcely true brotherhood. Mr. John Burns rightly says 'this is an absurd and vicious doctrine and places a premium on dissipation.' It would surely be more honest if those champions of labor, and of the oppressed, would teach the advantages they themselves derived from total abstinence to their brothers. The money which is now wasted on drink, if spent in propaganda work, would go a long way towards ameliorating the hard lot of the workers until such other reforms as they demand are secured, or, if it was taken home, it would do much to assuage the sufferings of the great army of underfed school children.—The 'Alliance News.'

One Way to Get Warm.

A patient was arguing with his doctor on the necessity of his taking a stimulant; he urged that he was weak and needed it; Said he, 'But, doctor, I must have some kind of stimulant; I'm cold, and it warms me.' 'Precisely,' came the doctor's crusty answer. 'See here; this stick is cold'—taking up a piece of wood from a box beside the hearth and tossing it into the fire. 'Now it is warm, but is the stick benefited?' The sick man watched the wood first send out little puffs of smoke and then burst into a flame, and replied, 'of course not; it is burning.' 'And so are you when you warm yourself with alcohol; you are literally burning up the delicate tissues of your stomach and brain.'—Exchange.

The Angel and the Demon.

(Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler, author of 'The Double Thread,' etc., in the 'Friendly Visitor'.)

A good angel strove with the Demon of Drink for the soul of Frank Marsden.

'I will save him by his word to his dying mother,' said the Angel; 'a man's word to his mother is strong.'

The Demon laughed. 'But I am stronger,' he said.

Jane Marsden lay dying, and as her end drew near, she besought her only son, with bitter tears and entreaties, that before she died he would give her a sacred promise to turn from the error of his ways.

'Oh, Frank,' she moaned, 'I cannot die in peace unless you promise me that after I am gone you will give up that accursed drink. It will ruin you, my lad, body and soul.'

Frank hid his handsome face in his hands, and sobbed aloud: 'Mother, mother, don't go away and leave me alone. I've been a bad son to you; but if you'll only stay with me I'll never give you another moment's sorrow as long as I live.'

The widow's thin hand wandered lovingly among her boy's thick curls. 'You'd have been a perfect son to me if it hadn't been for the drink, dear,' she said gently. 'There isn't a cleverer or a handsomer lad in the countryside than my Frank; and if you'd only be steady, you'd be a great man some day.'

'I shall never do any good without you to help me, mother.'

'Yes, you will, Frank, if only you'll leave off drinking. Promise me that you'll give it up for my sake,' begged the dying woman. 'I shan't rest easy in my grave till I have your sacred promise, dear. If you make a promise, I know that you will keep it; for you were always true to your word, even when you were but a little lad.'

And Frank—who, in spite of his faults, was a devoted son—gave the desired promise.

'You have made me so happy, Frank,' murmured the dying woman. 'I know you'll be a great man some day, and I hope that I shall be allowed to hear of it; for it would make me happier even in heaven to know that my boy had become what God meant him to be.'

So Jane Marsden went down to the grave rejoicing in her son's repentance. 'I am glad to die,' she said to herself. 'If by my death, Frank's heart and life may be changed; for a promise made to a dead mother will prove

stronger than all the vows sworn to a living one.'

For two years after his mother's death Frank religiously kept the promise he had made to her, and tasted no drop of the poison he had abjured; and, in consequence, he got on in the world, for he was a very clever lad, and as he was still young, people were willing to regard his wild boyhood as a youthful freak, and to help him to settle down into a respectable member of society. But at the end of those two years the old craving awoke with redoubled force, and its miserable victim again succumbed to its power. Marsden lost his situation and spent all his savings at the 'Blue Boar,' and altogether became a sorry spectacle for angels and men.

Again the good Angel strove with the Demon of Drink for the soul of Frank Marsden.

'I will save him by the might of a good woman's love,' said the Angel; 'a good woman's love is strong.'

The Demon laughed. 'Not as strong as I am,' he said.

When Frank Marsden was in the depths of his degradation, he saw for the first time the face of Alice Garth, and it seemed as if a new world had suddenly opened to him. For the sake of this sweet girl he felt that he could wrestle with the principalities and powers of darkness, and could prevail. And Alice loved the clever, handsome youth, who had fallen so far from his original estate; and her heart was filled with a passionate longing to lead him back again into the paths of righteousness.

'I am not fit to speak to you, Alice,' said Frank, one day. 'I worship the very ground you walk on; but I can't think what you can find to like in a miserable wretch like me whom everybody justly despises.'

'I love you, Frank,' replied Alice; 'and love, you know, sees the ideal hid in the person, just as the sculptor sees the statue hid in the block of stone. To the people who truly love us we appear to be what God meant us to be; the Frank whom I love is the real Frank, and his sins and shortcomings are nothing but a husk, which with my help he will succeed in casting off for ever.'

'Alice, I swear that if anything could make a respectable man again of me, such love as yours could do it. When I drink I feel as if some devil has entered into me, and that I am not myself at all. I assure you, my darling, no one loathes and despises me more at such times than I loathe and despise myself; and yet the evil that I would not, that I do.'

'But I want to stand at your side and help you not to do it, dear. As the sculptor carves the statue out of the stone, so I mean to make the ideal Frank that now only I can see, into the real Frank that everyone can see.'

'And you shall do it, sweetheart, if only you will have patience with me, and forgive me that which is past.'

Alice's face was as the face of an angel as she answered, 'My patience shall never grow weary, Frank, and my forgiveness shall be until seventy times seven.'

So with the prize of a lovely and loving wife before him, Frank Marsden put aside the sin which so easily beset him, and began the race of life afresh. And so quick and clever was he that again he made himself a place in his own world, and began to earn the admiration and respect of his fellow men. It required two or three years of hard work before he was in a position to offer Alice Garth such a home as he felt was meet for a refined, delicately nurtured girl, and those years of waiting were very sweet to both of them. During that time Alice was mistress of the village school, and happy indeed were the half-holidays that she and her lover spent together; in the winter reading and discussing books new and old, and in the summer reading their own life's romance instead, and studying in grassy lanes and sweet-scented hay-fields that never-wearying fairy tale which is always old and always new. At last their fairy tale ended—as fairy tales ought to end—with a gay little wedding in the village church; and Frank Marsden took Alice Garth to love and to cherish till death should them part.

(To be continued.)

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