



Temperance Department.

TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF.

(From Day of Rest).

V.

Fifty-six times had the moon waxed and waned since that eventful night.

It was a lovely morning in early summer. The old bell of St. Paul's had just struck the hour of eight; the million-peopled city was all astir. Very cheering the pleasant sunshine seemed to the myriad pedestrians who were hurrying to their various avocations.

Two gentlemen were walking along the Strand engaged in earnest conversation. One of them was short and thickly built. His bearded face glowed with quiet, scarce-repressible humor. His step was firm and independent, and he walked with his hands behind him under the tails of his coat. The other gentleman was tall, graceful in manner, and very anxious-looking. His handsome face was bronzed, his dark eyes were restless and piercing. He looked like a man who had travelled much and had seen much of the world.

Mr. F—, the shorter gentleman—a wealthy builder, by the way—suddenly broke short the conversation by exclaiming, as he pointed across the road, 'There, what d'ye think of that? That's what I call elegance and substantialness combined; and a very happy combination too. Ha! ha! Plenty of room for improvement in our street architecture, you think, eh?'

Yes; Mr. Sharland assented abstractedly, perhaps there was. Then a confabulation was commenced about American buildings, and buildings in general.

'I'll show you a concern presently,' said the enthusiastic little builder, 'worthy of the grandest city in the world. I'm just going to run in to have five minutes with the architect. A fine fellow! Clever and—'

'Pardon me,' said Mr. Sharland, interrupting; 'but while I think of it, have you heard anything lately of my brother-in-law, Bates?'

'Bates!' echoed Mr. F—. 'Oh, to be sure, he married your sister; well, I quite forgot.' A strange roguish smile played round his mouth and lurked at the corners of his small gray eyes. 'He was sold up some five or six years ago, and went off to Liverpool or some where, like a shot. I lost sight of him for some time, and I believe he got down very poor; but he is doing well now, to my certain knowledge.'

'How? where? where is he?' asked Sharland, breathlessly.

'Heyday! prythee keep cool, old fellow; remember, 'tis June.'

'Excuse me, Mr. F—, I'm anxious to know. During the past few years I have suffered much. At times I have despaired of ever finding my sister again.'

'But how is it you ever lost sight of them, Sharland?'

'By the merest bit of thoughtlessness. I wrote to my sister when I left Charleston, and told her to defer answering me until I sent her a proper address. She must have received it, as I afterward concluded, just as they were starting for Liverpool. I was just then giving up my connection with the Manchester house, that I was travelling for, and was about to engage with an American firm. One day the thought occurred to me that she might have addressed a letter to the Post Office at New Orleans; and on enquiry I found that one had lain there a long time for me; it contained sad news and was dated from Liverpool. I was then about to start for home, and you may suppose how great was my disappointment on arriving and enquiring for them in the locality she mentioned, to be told that no one of their name was known about there. I have since then crossed the Atlantic three or four times, but each time I returned to England my stay was necessarily so short that I was utterly unable to make thorough enquiries about them. Will you give me their address, Mr. F—?'

'Yes, in a minute,' said the tantalizing builder. 'Just step in here with me; I've a little business to transact.'

They had turned into a by-street and were now at the door of a handsome house. Mr. F— gave a noisy rap, and then turned his back to the door, placing his pert, consequential little figure in such a position that the brass plate should not be visible to Sharland.

'Master at home?' was his laconic query to the servant. He was evidently no stranger there, for without waiting her reply, he commenced a quick march to the first door on the left of the hall.

'Come in,' cried he to Sharland. Perceiving the apartment empty, he bounced out again, saying, 'Call the master quickly, my good girl.'

'I feel like some one who has no right here,' said Sharland, with a smile.

'All the right in the world, my dear fellow. I'll introduce you in a trice.'

A child's musical laugh rang through the hall, and a deep, manly voice was heard saying, 'I'll catch you, you rogue!' Then the door was flung wide open, and a little boy bounded in, his cheeks glowing with excitement; but, seeing two gentlemen, he coyly shrank back, and the next minute his face was hidden in his father's morning gown.

'You see, I'm with you bright and early this fine morning. I just want five minutes with you; but I beg pardon—allow me—Mr. Sharland, Mr. Bates.'

There was no regard paid to the rule of etiquette as the two last-named gentlemen stood staring at each other. Then hands were grasped. 'Such a grasp!

'Frederick Sharland!'

'Alexander Bates!'

As they thus stood face to face the eyes of both were moistened with tears; and while a few eager, earnest sentences were exchanged, the dapper little builder stood at the window regarding the passers-by with uncommon interest, and anon making a noise with his pocket-handkerchief, suggestive of the explosion of a miniature powder-magazine.

'Where is Marian?' said Sharland.

'You'll find her in the room at the farther end of the hall.' Thither he immediately repaired, and knocked gently at the door.

'Come in,' said the well-known voice—his sister's voice. He entered. It was a pleasant room, tastefully furnished. A young lady was standing near the window picking faded leaves from a few choice flowers that bloomed there. She had just finished arranging a vase of flowers on the nicely laid breakfast-table.

A matronly-looking lady was sitting in an easy chair with a little girl of three summers on her lap, who was impatiently waiting whilst mamma, with pardonable pride, was looping up the dainty whitesleeves with blue ribbon, so as to display the round dimpled arms to the greatest advantage.

A young gentleman of some seven or eight years was sitting on the carpet, puffing and panting and pushing back the brown curls from his heated brow. 'Harry musn't play at ball this weather; he gets too warm,' said his mother. Then perceiving a stranger in the room, instead of the servant, as she supposed, the speaker rose hurriedly and made an apology.

'Marian! dear sister!' and before she could speak she was clasped in her brother's arms. Then came a flood of happy, thankful tears.

'Oh, Fred, what a weary time we have waited for you!'

'And what a weary search I have had for you, dearest; but, thank God, you are found at last.'

The young lady at the window was looking round in astonishment. In a moment she comprehended it all, and approached. 'This is Mary?' asked Sharland, as he stooped and tenderly saluted her. 'God bless you, dear child! I scarcely recognize you—grown almost a woman. Where's my little pet, Jessie?'

A shade flitted across the mother's brow as she said softly, 'She sleeps away in Liverpool, Fred.'

'Nay, Marian! not dead?'

'Not dead, but sleeping,' returned the mother.

He placed his hand across his eyes, and said with emotion, 'Oh, Marian, I expected to see her sweet face once again. Will you tell me all about it?'

'I cannot just now, Fred. Wait awhile.' There was a solemn, tearful silence. Sharland broke it by saying, 'Time works sad changes.'

'And happy ones, too, thank God!' returned Mrs. Bates.

'Marian!' said her brother, suddenly; 'how was it I could not find you in Liverpool?'

'Oh, Fred! I have remembered with much pain that I forgot to tell you we had changed our name. It was so thoughtless, but at the time of writing we were in such great distress.'—After a pause she added: 'I tried to get your address through the Manchester house, but failed; and we tried every way to find you out. I have grieved much and often about it.'

'How strange that it should be so!' said Sharland, musingly.

Just then two fine lads came in. Mr. Sharland rose to meet them.

'John and Fred,' said Mrs. Bates. 'Boys, this is your long-lost uncle.'

After greetings and much chat, Mrs. Bates explained, 'They are home for their holidays just now. Mary arrived only yesterday. How delightful to have such a happy meeting!' Her eyes were filled with tears.

'I hope excess of happiness will not blunt your appetites,' said Mr. Bates, entering the room just then with his youngest boy. 'Mary, my darling, the table looks quite gay with your charming flowers; and they are well arranged,' he added, playfully stroking his daughter's hair.

Whilst little Harry was getting the large Bible on the table, and placing the chairs, Mr. Bates was standing by the window conversing in low tones with Sharland.

'Don't regret it,' he said in reply to something just uttered by the latter. 'Doubtless it was ordered for the best. I might perhaps have looked too much to you; as it was I leant only upon God.'

'How did this reformation work come about?' asked Sharland, smiling. 'You are the last man in the world I should have expected to see shining in the teetotal ranks.'

Bates did not reply for a minute—he was looking down thoughtfully on the floor; and as he raised his head, he said slowly, as if musing, 'And a little child shall lead them.' Then he proceeded to speak briefly of Jessie's death, and the circumstances attending it, not omitting to mention the disinterested kindness of the Liverpool merchant; and in conclusion said, 'That turning over a new leaf was hard work, but I tell you, Fred, what I went through then—the battling against the most terrible of all besetting sins, and all that—was nothing in comparison to what I experienced whilst going down. "The way of transgressors is hard"—hard!' he repeated, with emphasis. 'Never were truer words uttered than those.'

'Are you an abstainer, Fred?' he asked suddenly, with changed tone.

'Well, no!' replied Sharland; 'but as you know I am particularly moderate, I cannot think I shall ever overstep the mark.'

'Nor do I think you will,' said Mr. Bates; 'Still you are not out of danger. If any one had told me once that I should have done so, I should have scorned the bare mention of such a thing; but—you see. Well, here is a motive for you—"the weak brother." Oh, those weak ones! It harrows one's soul to think of them in the midst of such manifold temptations. Look at the allurements on every hand! Look at the drinking dens that can be counted by hundreds in our street. It's shameful!'

Mr. Bates always grew warm when touching upon this theme, as every true patriot would be expected to do who had a wealth of love in his heart for his kin and country.

Turning his head at that moment, he observed that the servants were in the room, and that all were waiting for him.

Mr. Sharland proceeded to the seat which Master Harry had assigned him close by himself. Then the father—the priest of the household—read in clear, beautifully-modulated tones, the sweet words, 'It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in Him;—and so on. Then prayer was uttered—such prayer! rising from hearts that remembered the worm-wood and the gall. Sometimes as it gushed up, it fell from the lips in broken words: but was it less acceptable for that? God knoweth!'

In conclusion, we may say, for the satisfaction of the enquiring reader, that upon a plain white marble tablet that adorns the quiet grave of a little child, is recorded the very day of the month and year on which Alexander Bates 'turned over a new leaf,'

and it is written immediately after the words, 'To the beloved memory of Jessie Bates, who fell asleep in Jesus.'

THE GLASS OF GIN;

OR, WHEN IT IS SAFEST TO RUN.

'Go the other way! go the other way!' cried Mr. Grace, a thoughtful neighbor, as Samuel Hawkes was about to get over the fence into Mr. Benson's orchard. Sad complaints had been made of the boys for pelting the fruit-trees, and Mr. Grace would have felt ashamed of any Sunday-scholar who would dare to take what belonged to another.

Mr. Grace had a good opinion of Samuel Hawkes, for he was a steady lad; but he thought that the temptation might be too much for him, so he persuaded him to take the other path.

'Samuel,' said he, 'listen to me. I once saw a man running from the door of a public-house, while two or three other men were hallooing after him. Ay, thought I, this fellow has been drinking, and is running away without paying for his liquor. Presently after, however, I overtook the man, and asked him what made him run away so fast from the tavern door.'

'Why, [sir,] said he, 'not a very long time ago I was a sad drunkard; my wife and children were in rags, and I was about going to jail, when a good friend stepped forward and agreed to save me from prison if I would promise never to drink another glass of spirits as long as I lived. Up to this hour the promise I then made has not been broken. Having walked a long way to-day, I called at the door of the public-house yonder for a draught of water; but no sooner had I drunk it, than an old companion of mine came up, and offered to treat me with a glass of gin. Having drunk my glass of good pure water, and seeing the landlord pouring out the gin, I fairly took to my heels, for I know too much of my own heart to trust myself. If I were to pause, and stop to talk in a place of temptation, it would be too strong for me; but so long as I can run away from it I am safe.'

'Well, thought I, I must take example from this man, and run away from temptation whenever it approaches me. Now it will be a good thing, if you will do just as he did; for a boy is as likely to be tempted by a cherry-cheeked apple, as a man is by a glass of gin.'

'Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.' Psalm 1: 1.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

THE FOLLOWING LETTER, written by the Rev. Sidney Smith in 1828, is a good temperance sermon: "My Dear Lady Holland: Many thanks for your kind anxiety respecting my health. I am not only better, but never felt half so well. Indeed, I find I have been very ill all my life without knowing it. Let me state some good arising from abstaining from all fermented liquors. First, sweet sleep—having never known what sound sleep was. I sleep like an infant or plough-boy. If I awake, no needless terrors, no black visions of life, but pleasing hopes and recollections. Holland House past and to come! If I dream it is not of lions and tigers, but of Easter dues and tithes. Secondly, I can have longer walks and make greater exertions without fatigue. My understanding is improved. I can comprehend political economy. I see better without wine or spectacles than when I used both. Pray leave off wine! The stomach quite at rest; no heart-burn; no pain; no distention. One evil only ensues from it. I am in such extravagant spirits that I must lose blood or look for some one who will bore or depress me."

ANY SAINT or sinner who dreams that the principle of prohibition will ever prevail to any considerable extent without the most earnest and persistent effort is laboring under a delusion. Whenever there is an opportunity to write a line or speak a word, the opportunity must be improved most faithfully. In the church and Sabbath-school, at home and elsewhere, in season and out of season, there must be constant energetic work. Somehow or other New England, which is now the deadest part of the North on the question of temperance, must be waked up.—*Zion's Herald.*