

THE CANADA TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE,

DEVOTED TO

TEMPERANCE, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE AND NEWS.

VOL. IX.

NOVEMBER 1, 1843.

No 13.

"THE RUINED FIREMAN" is no fiction. We hope its length will form no excuse for not reading it through. The moral is found at the end. While reading it in manuscript, we felt an involuntary wish created, that it might be read by every *fireman* in New York. Will our subscribers call attention to it, where they think it will do good?—*Olive Plant.*

THE RUINED FIREMAN.

BY MRS. A. C. LOVELAND.

According to time-honored custom, we will preface our story with the remark, that "It was on a time," when the Wallabout Martha Washington Society were taking measures to present Engine Company No. 12 with a banner, as a token of their approbation of the manliness they had displayed in enrolling themselves as Temperance Firemen, at the following conversation occurred between the lady who was to prepare the address, and present the banner, and the Committee who had solicited donations for the purchase of the splendid testimonial.

"Do, Mrs. —, in your address, remember William —, let some sentence be pointedly directed to him. His case has hitherto been so hopeless, and now he seems to need advice and encouragement; pray say something that may convince him that the Ladies of the Society have an interest particularly at heart."

"Oh, do; it will give him more confidence in the Pledge than ever," said several others, seconding the first speaker. "I will, ladies," replied Mrs. —, "but I should really like to see this young man previously, if I could, when I present the banner to the foreman, I may know at one individual in the Company to select, as I express my sentiments you wish me to embody in my remarks."

"To-morrow I will point him out to you," said the Diffident. "Have you heard, ladies, how he expressed himself on his return from the meeting at Broadway Tabernacle last week, where his Company were all present, having been escorted from the ferry by two of the New York Companies of Temperance Firemen?"

"No, no; what did he say? how was he pleased? tell us," was reiterated from every quarter.

"I will tell you with pleasure," replied the lady. "The next morning he was describing the scene to his gratified mother; and after detailing their reception by the New York men, and their triumphal march up Broadway, he exclaimed, 'Oh, mother the spacious Tabernacle was crowded to welcome us; it was filled with ladies and gentlemen, it seemed to me that the ladies, the beautiful ladies most singled me out, to smile upon me. They could see the hardest case in the Company. Only think, mother, they looked at me, and smiled on me.' His mother, when she related the observation to me, could not refrain from weeping; and she says he anticipates such rich enjoyment, if he can only be permitted to march under the banner he hears we are preparing for No. 12."

"May he be assisted to keep the Pledge, by power from above," remarked one who had not yet spoken, "for his case since he entered his nineteenth year, until now that he has seen his twenty-seventh, have all been worse than I could expect—and, for my part, I tremble for him. Many of his associates have sworn to win him back. And I much trust they will succeed, for his finances are so impoverished by his dissipation, that he cannot provide himself with suit-

able apparel to go about to Temperance meetings, unless he goes in his fireman's dress—and that he won't like to do, for fear of remarks being made; and thus I fear he will be led into his old track, for there is no work now for those of his trade, nor is it likely there will be for months."

A cloud now gathered on the countenances of those who had hitherto been so cheerful, and a sad misgiving pervaded every breast. At this moment another lady entered, who had been elated, and on seeing such evident sadness on every face, inquired what had occurred. The foregoing conversation was repeated to her, and anxiously did they wait to hear her opinion.

"Ah!" said she, "I wish all who have signed the Pledge would act with the spirit he did, when last week some of his old companions endeavoured to cheat him into drinking liquor."

All eyes were now turned in earnest attention to the speaker, as she proceeded to tell them the particulars. It appeared that two or three of them had planned to ask him into a store in the vicinity, to take a glass of root beer with them, and then, if he consented, one was to draw off his attention, while the other was to pour a glass of rum into the beer. Accordingly William was invited, accepted the invitation, and entered the store. But he was on his guard, and while the one was complimenting him on the decision he had manifested in signing the Pledge, he saw the other one mingle the fire-water with his draught. He said nothing, however, until the old familiar expression, "Come, take a drink!" sounded in his ears. Then placing himself in the right position, he raised his glass to his lips—but suddenly turning, dashed its contents into the face of his treacherous enemy, and turned and left the premises.

"Are you sure this actually happened?" asked the lady who seemed the Didymus of the Society.

"Certainly, Madam! and I think our banner will never be disgraced by William B——'s defection," replied the relater of the incident.

The next day William was pointed out to the lady who had desired to mark his countenance, and the previous interest she felt in his case became more than doubled. He had refrained from drink long enough to allow his naturally clear complexion again to appear, and his bright blue eye to beam with renewed lustre. His hair curled in close ringlets, over a brow where the phrenologist would have found much to admire, and the disciple of Lavater might have scanned his features, and reported him one who had "a kind heart, a forgiving temper, and a yielding spirit."

The banner was at length completed, and the address prepared—and on the 3rd of March, 1842, the Methodist Church in Wallabout was filled with an attentive audience to witness its presentation.

Hose Company 33, of New York, were present by invitation, and beautifully impressive was the order in which the two Companies marched in and took their seats beneath the sacred dome.

After some preliminary addresses and some sweet singing by a few members of the Lady Washingtonian Choir of New York, who had volunteered their services, the banner was brought forward and displayed before the delighted audience. As soon as the enthusiasm of its welcome greeting had ceased, Mrs. —, addressed the foreman of the Company, whilst a death-like silence pervaded the church.