

TEMPERANCE.

DENNIE AND HIS FATHER; OR, THE DOUBLE PLEDGE.

On the shores of the beautiful Horicon, now known as Lake George, in the eastern part of New York, there lived, a few years ago, a clergyman. His happy family of five daughters, and a darling son, a boy of more than ordinary promise, were growing up under the influence and instruction of such parents as few children could boast.

The time at which my story commences was before the days of temperance. It was when every family kept a supply of ardent spirits constantly on hand; and children were accustomed to the dangerous beverage daily. So it was in this family. The little "Dennie," accustomed every morning to his glass of bittern, and to a treat every time a friend called upon the family during the day, soon began to show a decided fondness for intoxicating drink, and sought for more frequent occasions to gratify his taste.

One morning the little Dennie came running in with the eager inquiry: "Mother, Mr. Smith is going to have a raising this afternoon, and James has invited me. May I go?" "My son, if your father thinks it best, you may go," his mother replied.

His father's consent was readily obtained; and after dinner he started off full of happy anticipation. Arrived at the place, his attention was occupied for a time in the erection of the building; too soon, however, he discovered a keg on the premises which his ready genius quickly told him, contained his favorite beverage.

It was not till the evening of the second day that he was restored to perfect consciousness. His parents thought it best not to speak to him of the cause of his illness for some days, hoping his own reflections would do much good; but in this they were disappointed—he did not exhibit the first symptom of remorse or consciousness that he had done wrong.

About a week after the event just related, his father invited him, one pleasant morning, to take a walk. Their road lay along the shore of the lake, and was lined with stately trees on either side. For a time they walked on in silence.

"Dennie," said he, "do you know what it was that made you sick the other day?"

"Why, I suppose I drank too much rum," he heartlessly replied.

"Well, my son, do you know that I think you are in danger of becoming a drunkard?"

"Why, father, I know you tell me so, but I am not afraid of it. You drink rum every day, and you are not a drunkard; and when I get old enough to know how much it will do for me to drink, then I can keep from becoming drunk, too."

They both seated themselves on a rock near the shore, and most faithfully did his father speak of the evils of intemperance; then taking a small gold watch from his pocket, which Dennie had long desired to call his own, he said, "Dennie, if you will never drink any more rum, I will give you this gold watch. Will you do it?"

Rising from his seat and looking his father full in the face, he replied: "If it is wrong for me to drink rum I scorn to be hired not to drink it. But I will tell you, sir, what I will do. If it is wrong for me to drink it is wrong for you; and, if you will stop drinking I will."

Had a flash of lightning burst from the cloudless sky above them, his father would not have been more startled. How could he preach or perform the laborious duties of pastor without his daily glass of bittern? How could he get up in a cold winter night and go and pray by the bedside of some dying parishioner, without a glass of something to prevent his taking cold? How could he attend to the various ecclesiastical meetings of the church without something to help him bear the fatigues of the journey? The sacrifice was indeed great, but the welfare of his son demanded it. And summoning all his resolution, with a faltering voice he replied—"I will do it, my son." And thus they pledged themselves to total abstinence.

The lake, the trees, and the pure blue sky were the only witnesses, save only that holy Being who is everywhere. As they retraced their steps, the father, taking the little watch from his pocket, gave it to Dennie, and said, "My son, you have long wished that I should give you this watch. It is yours as long as you keep your promise. Should that ever be broken, I shall expect you to return it to me; till then, let it be a token to you of this promise we have now made."

Years have passed; and the same little "Dennie" is now a distinguished clergyman in one of our most populous Western cities. Four bright little boys call him father. The same little gold watch decorates his parlor wall, and often does he point to it and tell of the danger and his escape from the whirlpool of intemperance.—Exchange.

THE DANGER OF WINE.

I had a widow's son committed to my care. He was heir to a great estate. He went through the different stages of college, and finally left with good moral character and bright prospects. But during the course of his education he had heard the sentiment advanced, which I then supposed correct, that the use of wine was not only admissible, but a real auxiliary to the temperance cause.

After he had left college for a few years he continued respectful to me. At length he became reserved. One night he rushed unceremoniously into my room, and his appearance told the dreadful secret. He said he came to talk with me. He had been told during his senior year that it was safe to drink wine, and by that idea he had been ruined. I asked him if his mother knew this. He said no; he had carefully concealed it from her. I asked him if he was such a slave that he could not abandon the habit. "Talk not to me of slavery," he said; "I am ruined, and before I go to bed I shall quarrel with the bar-keeper of the Tonine for brandy or gin to satisfy my burning thirst." In one month this young man was in his grave. It went to my heart. Wine is the cause of ruin to a great portion of the young men of our country.—Professor Goodrich.

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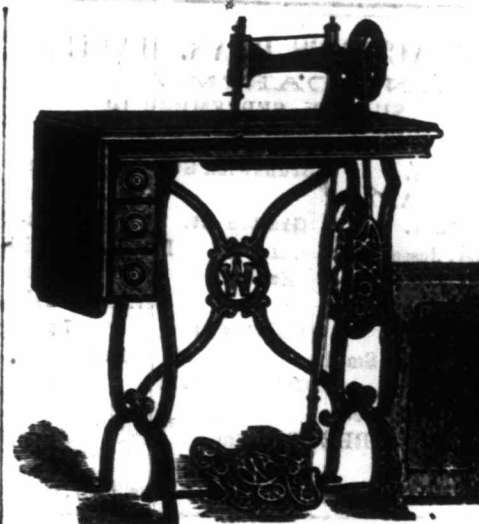
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