



Tobacco Catechism.

THE SLAVERY OF TOBACCO.

(By Julia Colman, National Temperance Society, New York.)

LESSON V.

Q.—Why do not men give it up when they find it is hurtful and so vile, and costs so much?

A.—Many would be very glad to do so, but they find it hard to break up the habit once formed.

Q.—What makes it hard?

A.—Because, when the tobacco is stopped, the system rests from its terrible poison fighting, and that makes a feeling of sinking; then there comes a thorough overhauling and cleaning out, and the man, not understanding it, thinks he is sick, and must take tobacco to cure him, and so it deceives him, and he keeps on.

Q.—Why do boys ever commence using it?

A.—Because they see men using it, and, as they are going to be men some day, they want to use it too.

Q.—How did our men come to use it in the first place?

A.—They saw the wild Indians use it.

Q.—A very poor reason. But what can we do about it?

A.—The boys can do some good by learning all they can about the mischief it does, so that they will never wish to learn to use it.

Q.—How can we help each other in this good work?

A.—Anti-Tobacco societies and Bands of Hope can be formed, in which these truths will be studied, and people can give money to distribute tracts, and editors can show it up in their papers, so that everybody can learn what mischief it does.

Q.—How much good will that do?

A.—They tell us that knowledge is power, and, if the wild Indians did not know any better than to poison themselves with tobacco, perhaps intelligent Christian people can learn, and we mean to try.

Across the Sea

(A True Story.)

On Chester street in Cheltenham, England, was a quaint old house. The street door opened directly into the plain but neat sitting room. In one corner was a hair-cloth covered lounge, and in another stood on old clock, an heirloom of three or four generations. Around the wall was arranged a row of straight backed old chairs. Pretty plants bloomed in the windows. The adjoining room served as dining-room and kitchen. Above these were bed-rooms. This was the home of surly John Chaucer, his wife and two sons. His meat-shop stood only a few feet away. Mrs. Chaucer was a cheerful little woman, whose good nature counteracted much of the influence of her husband's ill temper, and smoothed many rough places for the feet of her children. James Stewart lived just across the street. He also had two children, a boy and a girl. Mary Stewart had dark hair, large brown eyes and rosy cheeks. She was a bright, mischievous child. Although a companion in all her brother's boyish adventures, she was never rude. Because of some grudge surly John held against Mr. Stewart, their children had never been allowed to play together. As the children grew older naturally this restraint, for which they could see no reason, led them to seek opportunities to break through the unfriendly barriers. A strong friendship sprang up between Tom Chaucer and Mary Stewart, which, unconsciously to the maiden, ripened into a case of true love. However, Tom knew Mary was the idol of his life.

Tom and Mary were sitting on her father's doorstep in the early twilight. Tom went hastily to a rosebush near by, plucked a rose and presented it to Mary. As she bent admiringly over it he

said, 'Won't you be my rosebud, Mary? I love you.'

A few days later Mary asked Tom, 'How will your father receive the news of our engagement?' The task of breaking the news to his father did not seem so hard at that moment as it afterwards did, and he replied quickly, 'Oh, he will scold at first, of course, but he will come around all right.'

The more Tom thought about it, the greater his difficulty appeared. Encouraged by his mother's approval and ready sympathy, Tom went into his father's shop, determined to settle the affair.

Finding the butcher alone he began:

'Father, I—I want to tell you something.'

The butcher dropped the great knife with which he was slicing beefsteak, and stared at Tom in astonishment. He was not accustomed to private conferences with his sons. Under his breath he said: 'What's the matter with the boy; is he daft?' To Tom:—'Well, tell it! Don't stand there, with your hands in your pockets and your mouth open enough to swallow this quarter o' beef, but never say a word?'

Perhaps to gain courage, Tom balanced himself on the edge of a hogshead of brine prepared to pickle beef. Then with a desperate effort, he stammered, 'I—I am engaged to Mary Stewart.'

'You! I'll fix you,' said the angry father, starting towards Tom.

Splash! Tom had tumbled backwards into the barrel. His one shrill cry for help was heard by several men who came to the rescue.

The butcher, without touching his son, was storming about the shop; and in his frenzy uttered incoherent phrases that led the rescuers to think that thieves had caused the disturbance.

'Here's the villain,' shouted one of the men, hearing Tom splashing in his briny bath, and attempting to climb out. 'Halt, or I'll shoot.' shoot.

Standing still and rubbing the brine into, rather than out of his eyes, Tom wailed piteously, 'It's I. I fell in myself.'

'Well, it's yer voice, and not a sight of ye that saves ye,' said the man. 'You look like a drowned rat! A lively pickle ye be!'

In the meantime the butcher had disappeared and was laying the poor boy's sin before Mrs. Chaucer. Tom being free once more made no explanation, and the men departed shaking with laughter. This was the beginning of much trouble for Tom. He bore his father's censure and harshness with patience, and worked as he had never worked to learn the carpenter trade.

For two years he had worked and waited when his father was prostrated with fever. Disease and an accusing conscience tended only to sharpen the butcher's temper, making him almost unmanageable. The second week of his father's illness, although he continued to scold him, surly John began to show a preference for Tom's services, finally insisting upon having his constant care.

One night the butcher lay very quiet, with his eyes closed. Tom thought he was asleep. Weary with much watching Tom could not keep awake any longer. As he sat with his head dropped forward he felt a touch. Immediately he awakened and found his father's eyes fixed upon him, with a strange, new expression in them. He clasped Tom's hand and in a trembling voice said:—'Tom, you have been a good son, a very good son. You and Mary have my blessing.'

Poor Tom discovered that his father was dying, and called the family.

Let us draw a curtain round this flickering life and let it go out in the midst of the family circle. When the shackles of mortality begin to fall off, how often the cramped soul reveals its better promptings!

The news of the butcher's death spread rapidly through the town. Many who had been accustomed to say, 'Surly John,' came to pay their respects to 'Dear Mr. Chaucer's remains.' John Chaucer was laid to rest in the church-yard. According to his wish the echo of the funeral knell announced the marriage of Tom and Mary.

For five years they lived happily in the old house. Then Tom, thinking he could earn more money in America, kissed his wife and baby good-by and sailed for the new world. Yes, he would send his wages back to bring his family to a better home.

In the saloon district of Minneapolis a mission had been established. There is a chil-

dren's meeting in progress. The sweet, clear voices of the boys and girls ring out above the noise of the street. An old man takes his seat just inside the door. The song is finished. The superintendent, a lady, says: 'I want every one upon whom I call to tell us a bible story.' The request meets with a hearty response. After several stories have been told a little girl's hand is raised. 'Please, may I tell a story, too?' Permission being granted, with a simplicity known only to childhood, she tells the story of Jonah. How he tried to run away from duty, away, away across the sea, but the fish swallowed him. God made the fish let Jonah loose and made him willing to do right. While the closing hymn is being sung the old man leaves the room and disappears in the darkness.

A week has passed and the boys and girls are again assembled. This evening the subject is temperance. The superintendent makes a few remarks, then asks for information from the boys and girls. A girl of twelve answers the question. What makes a drunkard's nose red? She carefully explains how the nerves controlling the capillaries are paralyzed by the alcohol and that keeps the blood near the skin until it becomes congested and cannot return to the heart. The result is a red nose.

'That's what made my nose red! Pray for me.'

The speaker is the old man who was in the meeting last week. At the close of the meeting the superintendent listens to his story.

'Twenty years ago I came to this country hoping to make money. An illness soon after I landed consumed the little money I had. I found it hard to get work. While wandering about in New York searching for work, I met a man who was very kind and promised to get me a job. A saloon-keeper wanted some work done. I did not like to take the place but did not wish to offend my new friend, and could see no other way to get work. I took the job, and that very day began to travel the road which leads to death.'

'I left a wife and child in England. If she is living she believes me dead. I could not let her know my life. I wrote her for a time dwelling upon the prospects of a bright future, keeping silent about the present, but never sending her any money. All the time I was falling lower and lower. At last I bribed my boon companions to write my wife that I was dead.'

'Why did you come in here?'

'A short time ago I came to the city. Last week I was walking past this place and heard the music. Not knowing why, I stopped at the door. I was surprised to see you and a crowd of young people holding some sort of a meeting. A polite boy invited me in and offered me a singing book. I would not have stopped to hear a man preach. I had not been in a place of worship for more than fifteen years. I took a seat near the door and thought I would see what was going on. That Jonah story was too much for me. I thought I was another Jonah. I ran away from duty across the sea. "Jesus, lover of my soul," cast a spell over me. Could he love my soul? I could stand no more; I left the room, but could not forget what I had heard. I have been miserable ever since. I did not want to come here to-night, but something compelled me to come.'

Poor man! he had been serving a hard master. Before leaving the room he decided to change masters. He went out with a new purpose and a new hope. Being a skilful workman and once started in the right way he was kept busy. Every week his voice was heard blending with the mission boys and girls. He said their meetings helped to strengthen him to meet temptation.

One evening he told the boys and girls part of his story. In closing he said: 'I am saving my wages now. When I get enough money I will try to find my wife and son.'

Six months later the superintendent received this note from Dr. James Roberts: 'Tom Chaucer fell from a high scaffold to-day, and cannot live many hours. He wants to see you.'

The lady went immediately. Tom gave her the names of a number of his old neighbors in England and asked her to try and find his wife and son, if living. He said: 'Tell Mary God has forgiven me. I had hoped to have her forgiveness on this side, but God's will be done.'

The sentence was finished in a whisper. Tom had crossed the sea, the sea of life.—Jennie Shuford, in 'North and West.'