

the ways of heathendom were so deeply ingrained in her that she did not care to try to learn; whether any ray of light and understanding penetrated her darkened heart it would be difficult to say. The service of sin is a hard service, and poor Durgamma found it so; her end was so tragic and so sad that I cannot tell you about it here. Are you not glad that the three daughters are saved from a similar fate, which in all human probability would have been theirs?

Suppose someone had come to Durgamma when she was a little girl and taught her to serve Jesus as her little daughters are being taught now, would not her life have been quite different? And if little Sundri had known about the Saviour, and had married a Christian man who himself tried to follow Christ, how much misery, and probably an untimely death, would she have been spared! And there are now thousands and thousands of little girls in India who never have a chance to hear about the Lord Jesus, and they are growing up into superstitious ignorant women, with no power to resist evil and to overcome temptation. Shall we not try and help some of them before it is too late?

The Unsteady Hand.

(*'League Journal.'*)

"There is a greater curse than drunkenness," said Dr. Grantley.

"It may be so," I answered; "but it so happens that I am not aware of its name or existence."

"Moderate drinking," said the doctor, with an emphasis of tone and manner that showed him to be very much in earnest.

Dr. Grantley was somewhat of an enthusiast on the subject of temperance; yet a clear, strong thinker. I did not expect from him any special pleading or begging of the question.

"I would like to hear you make good the assertion," I replied.

"Nothing is easier. The fact is so plain that I am surprised it is not seen by everyone."

"I am all attention. Make it plain to me," said I.

"You do not trust a drunkard in any responsible position," he replied. "You would not, if he were a lawyer, give an important cause into his hands; nor if he were a surgeon, risk him with a delicate operation. Known drunkards are not put in command of ships, nor in charge of steam engines, nor assigned to places where life, property, or important interests are at stake. Once class a man with drunkards, and you narrow his influence, both for good or evil, to a small circle. You rule him out of the great world of action, and render him comparatively harmless. He is his own worst enemy—disgusting to all around him; but of this much use, that he is a living expounder of the evils of intemperance, teaching by example their saddest and most humiliating lesson."

"But your respectable, virtuous, high-minded moderate drinkers," the doctor continued, "hold to society a very different relation. They command your ships and armies; they are your lawyers, your surgeons, your engineers, your merchants and manufacturers, with whom you risk your goods and money. You trust them with your highest and best worldly interests. And it never seems to occur to you that they who drink sometimes tarry long at the wine; and may, in some fatal moment, when a

clear head or steady hand is the only guaranty of success or safety, hurt you, through a slight and temporary incapacity, beyond repair."

I drew a long, deep breath, as the magnitude of a danger I had not thought of loomed up before me with an almost appalling distinctness.

"While we count the drunkards who are not trusted, by tens," said the doctor, "we may count this other class, who hold our lives and property in their hands, by thousands."

I observed that Dr. Grantley's voice had in it a low thrill, and that he was unusually disturbed. "You feel strongly on this subject," said I.

"There is cause," he answered, dropping his tones and bending his head forward as though a weight had fallen on it suddenly. He was silent for an unusually long time.

"I will give you," he said at length, "an illustration of what I mean. Are you at leisure for half an hour?"

"Entirely at your service."

"I drink nothing stronger than tea or coffee, as you are aware. Once I took my glass of wine at dinner and in social circles. It was genteel; had in it a smack of good breeding and familiarity with society. I cultivated the little vanities of connoisseurship, and talked in the usual self-satisfied way of brands, vintages, flavours, and the like, as fluently as anyone. I had, so to speak, all the wine-lingos at my finger ends, and was not a little proud of the accomplishment."

"My special work, as you know, is surgery—a work that, of all others, requires the clear head and steady hand. There are occasions when, if the knife passes by an hundredth part of an inch from the right direction, a fatal result is inevitable. We cut down into the quivering flesh, and grope about darkly among sensitive nerves and life-blood arteries, with death waiting eagerly for some fatal breach in the delicate organism."

"We hear frequent allusion made to steadying the nerves with wine or brandy. I was sufficiently well acquainted with the action of this class of stimulants on myself, to ignore them altogether for at least twenty-four hours prior to the performance of even the lightest surgical operation. I would have regarded it as criminal to take a glass of wine just before using the scalpel, because its effect would have been to disturb the free and rapid directions of my will to the cutting hand, hindering, confusing, and, it might be, rendering death certain where I was trying to save life."

"I know that it is the custom with some surgeons to steady their nerves with wine or brandy before going to the operating table; but I think it will be found in nearly all of these cases that the habitual use of these articles has substituted an artificial for a normal steadiness of nerve, and that the stimulant has become a necessity through abuse. It is said of professional gamblers that many of them rigidly abstain from drink in order to secure clear heads and steady hands for their infamous work. The surgeon, of all other men, should profit by their example."

"Did it not occur to you," I said, "that in your own social use of wines you were gradually substituting this general artificial steadiness of nerve for the natural and healthy, and that, in time, your abstinence, preliminary to using the knife, might defeat the end in view—that Nature might not rally her forces quickly enough after

the withdrawal of substitutes?"

"Yes; this very thought that you suggest did often present itself, but I pushed it aside; it was not agreeable, and I would not look it calmly in the face. I had come to like the taste of wine, and to enjoy a social glass with my friends."

"Surgery was my first love, and I pursued its study and practice with an interest and ardour that never abated. My opportunities were good, and I made the best of them. After acting as assistant in a large hospital for two years I went to Paris and Vienna, spending two years in the admirably-conducted hospitals of those cities under circumstances of special advantage. Returning, I entered, at the age of twenty-six, on the practice of my profession. In five years I had established a reputation as wide as the country. Many of my operations—some of them almost unheard of in the profession—were reported in our own, and transferred to foreign medical journals. I had more than the fame I coveted."

"There was a period in my professional life when scarcely a day passed without some call on me for the skill that lay in my practised hand, and scarcely a week without some prolonged and difficult or dangerous operation. The strain on my nerves was very great—the amount depending very much on the character and condition of my patients, and the degree of risk involved."

"It was about this time, when reports of my brilliant operations were spoken of as a perpetual surprise, that the event occurred which I am about to relate."

"I had a friend, older by several years, with whom I had long been intimate. He had watched my professional debut and career with an interest as deep as he could have felt in a brother; and he was very proud of my success. One day he came to my office, and after a word or two, said, a look of concern settling over his face, "I wish you would call in and examine a lump on Miriam's neck."

"He spoke of his wife."

"What kind of a lump?" I asked.

"It is about the size of a walnut, and is increasing in size, I think, quite rapidly."

"It may be only the temporary swelling of a gland," I remarked, with assumed indifference. "Is it sore to the touch?"

"Not in the least; but Miriam begins to complain of a sense of obstruction, as if there were pressure on a blood-vessel. I've wished to speak to you about it for some time, but she would not consent."

"Only about the size of a walnut?" I inquired.

"Maybe a little larger, though—not much."

"I will call round this afternoon and look at it," said I. "Tell Mrs. Baldwin to expect me about four o'clock. You will be at home?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, and turned to go. But there were questions in his mind that he could not leave without asking. "Doctor," he said, coming back, and sitting down, "this may seem a very small matter in your eyes, but I am seriously troubled. It is no swelling of the gland, but a tumor. Of that I am satisfied."

"He looked searchingly into my face."

"What is the exact location?" I asked.

"On a line with the ear, and just above the collar-bone."

"We were both silent for a time."

"As I said, doctor," my friend resumed, "this thing has troubled me from the be-