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32 ANDREWS, N. B., WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16, 1854. [Vol. 21]

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

TEACHERS' MEETING

A Meeting of the Teachers of Charlotte County was held in St. Andrews on the 31st inst., and they, after deliberating on various matters, drew up the following Petition, which they intend to lay before the Legislature, after receiving the signatures of the Teachers who were absent; hoping that other Teachers throughout the Province will take up the subject, and do likewise.

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

We the undersigned licensed teachers of Charlotte County, confiding in your desire to promote, by wise legislation, the welfare of all classes in the community, here respectfully lay a statement of our grievances before you, trusting that due consideration will lead you to perceive that they are not only felt by us to be almost insupportable, but also have a most pernicious influence on society, which we therefore hope will be redressed without delay.

1st.—It must be obvious to you, as it certainly is to us, whenever we require to make an appeal to our purses, that we are not sufficiently paid for our labors, though we were always to receive our whole nominal salaries, which we frequently do not—that we are not so well remunerated as the common laborer; and are therefore, as far as gold leads to respectability, placed beneath him, and consequently cannot exercise that influence for good which ought to belong to our profession in all civilized countries.

2d.—We have no place that we can with propriety call "home;" our miserable incomes will scarcely procure for us a decent lodging; and the agreements which we are forced to make with the people, compel many of us to move about from house to house; to-night enjoying comparative comfort, to-morrow the reverse; staying a week in one place, and a week in another; treated at one time with civility, again with contempt—just as the caprice of the moment may prompt our employers—many of whom consider our services nugatory, and our support burdensome; such must have a baneful effect on society; such, indisputably, detract from our usefulness, and is certainly derogatory to the government under which we live.

3d.—We are too much under the control of the people, who only employ those, whatever be their qualifications, that are willing to labor for the smallest amount of money, while the engagements of others who are well qualified, who strive to do their duty, tend to be useful members of society, are unnecessary; for, at the end of six months many of us are compelled to remove, just when our usefulness is becoming apparent, and often without being able to collect more than one-third of the salary we were promised. Many of the school houses also are not properly located, suiting neither the convenience of teachers, nor pupils, having been placed where the spleen, the pride, or some paltry consideration of an individual suggested. These are no exaggerated statements. School Inspection Reports prove that they are true to the letter; nay more, that many of the school houses are too low in the ceiling, ill constructed, and most unwholesome buildings. We ask, does such a state of things, in a matter of so vital importance, reflect honour upon our legislators, or upon the inhabitants of N. B., who, in other respects may justly be called a great and prosperous people?

4th.—The discretionary power vested in the County or Local Inspector to grant Third Class Licences, at the same time that the salary of that officer is made dependent on the number of schools, under his supervision—a power liable to great abuse; and lastly, the omission of the legislature to provide, by an increase of money for each County, for the increased demands consequent upon an augmentation of the teacher's salary.

It would be tiresome to us, and perhaps uninteresting to you, to enumerate any more of the defects of the present school system; such as a want of proper books, maps, globes, black-boards, and especially a map, and a concise political, and natural history of the Province; we therefore, instead of doing so, rather suggest—with all deference to your superior legislative wisdom—the following method of redressing these evils, and of rendering, through time, our educational affairs equal to those of any country in the world.

1st.—That government pay one-third of the teacher's salary; that third being not less for a First Class Teacher than forty-five pounds currency per annum; other teachers receiving in proportion to the class to which they belong; that the other two-thirds be raised from the people, either by legal assessment or voluntary contribution.

2d.—That in each district the School house be so located as to suit the convenience of the majority of the inhabitants; that no new school house, under liability of losing the government allowance, be constructed having a ceiling lower than fourteen feet.

3d.—That no teacher be under the necessity of making a new agreement with the people at the expiration of each six months, as many have to do; but that the period of a teacher's services where they are continually requisite, be of no specified limits, if he conduct himself properly, as a moral man, and give satisfaction to the School Inspector, and the majority of the parents of his pupils; for that would unquestionably have a tendency to elevate teachers as a class in society; would extend the sphere of their usefulness, and will be of indelible benefit to those placed under their tuition.

It may appear to you that we have made an exaggerated recital of our grievances; but we need not remind you, that School Inspectors' reports, combined with your own observations, must fully establish—even to the most prejudiced mind—the truth of what we have stated. No doubt much has been done by the Provincial government towards the furtherance of education; perhaps, considering circumstances, as much as could have been accomplished; but when you have examined the statistical accounts of the British School System, the Four of an Oxford Student on the Continent of Europe for the purpose of collecting educational information, or a description of the School Laws of some of the States of the American Union, you will at once perceive that no more has been done by our government than by those of other countries; and more, that a great reformation, such as we have suggested, is absolutely necessary, if we, as a people, desire to keep pace with the advancement of the age.

In conclusion—Looking to you as faithful legislators anxious for the prosperity of all ranks and classes of your countrymen, we with confidence lay this Petition before you, hoping that you, after due deliberation, will determine upon such measures as will lead to the actual welfare and happiness of all; and we, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

THE DRUNKARD'S BIBLE

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

"There is more money made in the public line than in any other, unless it be pawn broking," said Martha Howley to her brother; "and I do not see why you should feel uncomfortable; indeed, I know that weeks pass with your touching beer, much less wine and spirits. If you did not sell them, somebody else would. And were you to leave the Grapes to-morrow, it might be taken by those who would not have your scruples. All the gentry say that your house is the best conducted in the parish."

"I wish I really deserved the compliment," interrupted Matthew, looking up from his day book. "I ought not to content myself with avoiding beer, wine, and spirits; if I believe, as I do, that they are injurious alike to the character and health of man, I should, by every means in my power, lead others to avoid them."

"But we must live, Matthew; and your good education would not keep you—we must live!"

"Yes, Martha, we must live! but not the lives of vampires; and he turned rapidly over the accounts, noting and comparing, and seemingly absorbed in calculation.

Martha's eyes became enlarged by curiosity—the small low curiosity which has nothing in common with the noble spirit of inquiry. She believed her brother wise in most things; but in her heart of hearts she thought him foolish in worldly matters. Still, she was curious; and yielding to what is considered a feminine infirmity, she said: "Matthew, what is your business?"

"Matthew made no reply; so Martha—who had been brought up to the bar" by her uncle, while her brother had been dreaming over an unproductive farm—troubled as usual about "much serving," and troubling all within her sphere by worn out and shrivelled up anxieties as much as by the necessary duties of active life—looked at Matthew as if speculating on his sanity. Could he think of giving up his business, because of that which did not concern him—but she would rather suggest—with all deference to your superior legislative wisdom—the following method of redressing these evils, and of rendering, through time, our educational affairs equal to those of any country in the world.

"I thought he was one of your best customers; he is an excellent workman; his wife has much to do as a clear starcher; and I am sure she spends every penny he earns here!"—such was Martha's answer.

"And more!" replied Matthew more. "Why, last week the store was eighteen shillings—besides what he paid for."

"He's an honourable man, Matthew," persisted Martha—"It is not long since he brought me six tea-spoons and a sugar tong, when I refused him brandy (he will have brandy). They must have belonged to his

wife, for they had not P. C. on them, but E. something; I forget what."

Matthew waxed wroth. "Have I not told you," he said "I do not tell you, that we must be content with the flesh and blood, without the bones and marrow of these poor drunkards? I am not a pawn broker to lend money upon a man's ruin. I sell to be sure, what leads to it, but that is his fault, not mine."

"You said just now it was yours," said his sister sulkily.

"Is it a devil or an angel that prompts your words Martha?" exclaimed Matthew, impatiently; then leaning his pale, thoughtful brow on his clasped hands he added: "But, however much I sometimes try to get rid of them, it must be for my good to see things as they are."

Martha would talk; she looked upon a last word as a victory. "He must have sold them whether or not as he has done all his little household comforts, to pay for what he has honestly drunk; and I might as well have them as any one else. My money paid for them, and in the course of the evening went into your till. It's very hard if, with all my labour, I can't turn an honest penny in a bargain sometimes, without being chid as if I were a baby."

"I'm sorely beset," murmured Matthew, closing the book with hasty violence—"sorely beset" the gain on one side, the sin on the other; and she gazed me and puts things in the worst light; never was man so beset," he repeated helplessly; and he said truly he was "beset"—by infirmity of purpose, that mean, feeble, painful frustration of so many good and glorious intentions.

It is not a blessed and a wonderful thing how the little grain of "good seed" will spring up and increase: if the soil be at all productive, how it will fructify! A great stone may be placed right over it; and yet the shoot will shoot forth—sideways, perhaps, after a long, noiseless struggle amid the weight of earth—a white, slender thing like a bit of thread that falls from the clipping scissors of a little heedless maid—creeps up, twists itself round the stone, a little, pale, meek thing, tending upwards—becoming a delicate green in the wooing sunlight—strengthening in the morning, when birds are singing—at mid day when man is toiling—at night, while men are sleeping, with it pushing away the stone and overshadows it in auspicious birth place with strength and beauty!

Yes! where good seed has been sown, there is always hope that, one day or other, it will, despite snares and pitfalls, despite scorn and bitterness, despite evil report, despite those wearying backsliders which give the wicked and the idle scoffers ground for rejoicing sooner or later it will fructify!

All homage to the good seed!—all homage to the good sower!

And who sowed the good seed in the heart of Matthew Howley? Truly, it would be hard to tell! Perhaps some sower intent on doing his master's business—perhaps some hard unconscious of the wealth it dropped—perhaps a young child, brimful of love, and faith, and trust in the bright world around—perhaps some gentle woman, whose knowledge was an inspiration rather than an acquirement—perhaps a bold, true preacher of the word, stripping the sinner of the robe that covered his deformity, and holding up his cherished sins as warnings to the world; perhaps it was one of Watt's hymns, learned at his nurse's knee (for Matthew and Martha had endured the un sympathizing neglect of a motherless childhood) a little line, never to be forgotten—a whisper-soft low, tender—a comfort in trouble, a stronghold in danger, a refuge from despair. Oh what a world's wealth is there in a simple line of childhood's poetry! Martha herself often quoted the *Busy Bee*; but her bee had no wings; it could muck in the wax but not fly for the honey. As to Matthew, wherever the seed had come from, there at all events it was, struggling but existing—biding its time to burst forth, to bud and to blossom, and bear fruit!

The exposure concerning the spoons and sugar tongs made Matthew so angry, that Martha wished she had never had anything to do with them; but instead of avoiding the fault, she simply resolved in her own mind never again to let Matthew know any of her little transactions in the way of buying or barter—that was all!

Matthew, all that day, continued mope thoughtful and silent than usual, which his sister considered a bad sign; he was reserved to his customers—nay worse—he told a woman she should not give gin to her infant at his bar, and positively refused the following Sunday to open his house at all. Martha asked him if he was mad. He replied "No," he was treating his senses. Then Martha thought it was best to leave him alone; he had been "worse"—that is, according to her reading of the word, "worse"—before—taken to the "dumps" in the same way, but recovered and gone back to his work "like a man."

Peter Croft unable to pay up his score, managed nevertheless, to pay for what he drank. For a whole week Martha would not listen to his proposals for payment "in kind"; even his wife's last shawl could not tempt her, though Martha confessed it was "a beauty, and what possible use could Mrs Peter have for it now? it was so out of character with her destination. She heard no more of it, so probably the wretched husband disposed of it elsewhere; this disappointed "her." She might as well have had it; she would not be such a fool again; Matthew was so seldom in the bar, that he could not know what she did! Time passed on Martha thought she saw one or two symptoms of what she called amendment in her brother. "Of course," she argued, "he will come to himself in due time."

In the twilight which followed that day, Peter Croft pale, bent and dirty, the drunkard's redness in his eyes, the drunkard's fever on his lips, tapped at the door of the room off the bar, which was more particularly Martha's room—it was in fact her watch tower—the door half glazed and the green curtain about as high from the middle division; over this the sharp observant woman might see whatever occurred, and no one could go in or out without her knowledge.

She did not say "Come in," at once; she longed to know what new temptation he had brought her, for she felt assured that he had neither money nor credit left.

—And yet she feared, Matthew made such a worry out of every little thing. The next time he tapped at the window of the door, her eyes met his over the curtain, and then she said "Come in," in a penetrating sharp voice, which was anything but an invitation.

"I have brought you something now, Miss Howley, that I know you won't refuse to take me a trifle on," said the ruined tradesman; "I am sure you won't refuse, Miss Howley. Bad as I want the money, I could not take it to a pawnbroker; and if the woman asks for it, I can say I lent it, Miss Howley—you know I can say that."

Peter Croft laid a Bible on the table, and folding back the pages with his trembling fingers, showed that it was abundantly illustrated by fine engravings. Martha loved "pictures"; she had taken a *Pilgrim's Progress*, and varying the devotional engravings it had contained with abundant cuttings out from illustrated newspapers, and a few colored caricatures had covered one side of a screen, which when finished, she considered would be at once the comfort and amusement of her old age. After the drunkard had partially exhibited its contents, he stood by with stolid indifference, while she measured the engravings with her eye, looking even and anon towards the screen. "Very well," she said uttering a deliberate untruth with her lips, while her mind was made up what to do—"very well; what did you say you wanted for it?" He repeated the sum; she took out exactly half, and laid the shining temptation on the table before him.

"Have you the heart, Miss Howley," he said while fingering rather than counting the money—"have you the heart to offer me so little for such a great deal?"

"If you have the heart to sell it I may have the heart to offer such a price," she answered with a light laugh; "and it is only a DRUNKARD'S BIBLE."

Peter Croft dashed the money from him with a bitter oath.

"Oh very well," she said; "take it—or leave it."

She resumed her work.

The only purpose to which a drunkard is firm is to his own ruin. Peter went to the door, returned, took up the money—"Another shilling miss? it will be in the till again before morning."

Martha gave him the other shilling; and after he was fairly out of the room, she grappled the book commenced looking at the pictures in right earnest, and congratulated herself on her good bargain. In due time the house was cleared, and she went to bed, placing the Bible on the top of her table, amongst a miscellaneous collection of worn out dusters and stained glass cloths "waiting to be mended."

That night the master of "the Grapes" could not sleep; more than once he fancied he smelt fire; and after going into the unoccupied room, and peeping through the key-holes and under the doors of those that were occupied, he descended to the bar, and finally entering the little bar parlour, took his day book from a shelf, and placing the candle, sat down, listlessly turning over its leaves but the top of the table would not shut, and raising it to remove the obstruction, Matthew saw a large family Bible; pushing away the day book, he opened the sacred volume.

It opened at the 23d chapter of Proverbs, and as if guided by a sacred light, his eyes fell upon the 29th verse, and he read:

"Who hath woe! who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?"

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"They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine."

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."

At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder!"

He dashed over the leaves in fierce displeasure, and, as of Galatian's, "Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God."

"New and Old, New and Old," murmured Matthew to himself, "I am condemned alike by the Old and New Testament." He had regarded intemperance and its consequences heretofore as a great social evil; the fluttering rags and the fleshless bones of the drunkard and his family, the broils, the contentions, the ill feeling, the violence, the murders wrought by the dread spirit of alcohol, had stood in array as social crimes, as social dangers; but he did not call to mind, if he really knew, that the Word of God exposed alike its destruction and sinfulness. He was moral in himself, but his heart was ever so wisely; and though he often found wisdom and consolation in a line of Watt's hymns, he rarely went to the Fountain of living waters for the strengthening and refreshing of his soul. He turned over the chapter, and found on the next page a collection of texts, written upon a strip of paper in the careful hand of one to whom writing was evidently not a frequent occupation.

Proverbs the 23d chap.—"For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." 1st Corinthians, 6th chapter, 10th verse.—"Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revellers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

"Again that awful threat!" murmured Matthew; "and have I been the means of bringing so many of my fellow creatures under its ban?"

1st Samuel, 1st chap.—"And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee." Luke 27—

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares."

"Ay, THAT DAY," repeated the landlord—"that day, the day that must come." Ephesians, 5th chap.—"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Proverbs, 20th chapter,—"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Woe to thee who selleth wine to thy neighbor, and mingleth strong drink to his destruction."

He rose from the table, and paced up and down the little room; no eye but His who seeth all things looked upon the earnestness and agitation of that man; no ear but the All-hearing heard his sighs; his half-muttered prayers to be strengthened for good.

He said within himself: "Who will counsel me in this matter?—to whom shall I fly for sympathy? who will tell me what I ought to do? how remedy the evils I have brought on others while in this business, even when my heart was alive to its wickedness? I had no friend to advise with—none who would do ought but laugh at and ridicule the idea of giving up a good business for conscience sake; but so it was that occurred to him—You have an immortal Friend, take counsel of Him, pray to Him, learn of Him, trust Him; make His Book your guide; and opening the Bible he read one other passage.

"Keep innocency, and take heed to the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last."

Pondering on this blessed rule of life, so simple and so comprehensive, he turned back the pages, repeating it over and over again, until he came to the first fly-leaf, where deaths were written the births, marriages, and deaths of the humble family to whom the Bible had belonged; and therein, second on the list, he saw in a stiff, half-printed hand, the name—EMMA HANBY, only daughter of James and Mary-Jane Hanby, born on and so married at such a date, to PETER CROFT!

Emma Hanby—born in his native village; the little Emma Hanby whom he had loved to carry over the brook to school—by whose side in boyhood he had sat in the meadows—for whom he had gathered flowers—whose milk pail he had so often lifted, over the church stile—whom he had loved as the never could or did love woman since—whom he would have married, if she, light-hearted girl that she was, could have loved the tall, yellow, awkward youth whom it was her passion to laugh at and her delight to call "Daddy"—was she then the wife—the term, soiled, tattered, worn out, insulted, broken-spirited wife of the Drunkard Peter Croft!

[Concluded in our next.]