

TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE,

DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE & NEWS.

PLEDGE.—We, the undersigned, do agree, that we will not use Intoxicating Liquors as a Beverage, nor Traffic in them; that we will not provide them as an article of Entertainment, nor for persons in our Employment; and that in all suitable ways we will discountenance their use throughout the community.

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[No. 20.]

Madalina; the Rag-Picker's Daughter.

(Concluded from our last.)

On they went down Anthony street, and we followed, determined to see the home of this portion of the city poor. It was but one block further—only one little space beyond this great, wide, open, railroad street, whose thoughtless thousands daily go up and down from homes of wealth to wealth-producing shops and stores, little thinking of the amount of human misery within a stone's throw of the rails on which they glide swiftly along.

One block further, and the street opens into a little half acre sort of triangular space, sometimes dignified with the name of "park," but why, those only who know can tell, for it has no fence, no grass, and but a dozen miserable trees; 'tis lumbered up with carts and piles of stones, and strings of drying clothes, and scores of unwashed specimens of young humanity, whose home is in the dirt, whether in the street or parent's domicile.

Here we stop. At the right, across the base of the "park," runs Little Water street, only one short block past the "Five Points House of Industry," or "Home" of the missionary, to Cross street, across which stands a substantial brick edifice on the site of the "Old Brewery." At the left, as though it were a continuation of Little Water street, lies that notorious Five Points collection of dens of misery, Cow Bay. It is a *cul-de-sac*, perhaps thirty feet wide at the mouth, narrowing, with crooked, uneven lines, back to a point about a hundred feet from the entrance. Into this court we tracked the kindling wood splitters, and treaded our way among the throng of carts and piles of steaming garbage, elbowing our way along the narrow side-walk, and up a short flight of broken, almost impassable steps, we reached the first floor hall of one of the houses just in time to see that great load of wood and its bearer toiling up a narrow, dark, broken stairway, which we assayed to climb, but just then, from the room on the left at the foot of the stairs, there came such a piercing, murder-telling, woman's shriek, that we started back, grasped our stout cane, determined to brave the worst for the rescue, made one step, pushed open the door, creaking with a horrid grating upon its rusty hinges, and stood in the presence of an Eve, before the fall, in point of clothing, but long, long after that in point of sin. As we entered the open door, she sprang towards it—her husband caught her by the hair and drew her back with no gentle hand or word. "Let me go, let me go, help; he wants to murder me; let me go; help, help, help." We did help, but it was help to the poor man, for she turned upon him with the fury of a tiger, scratching and tearing his face and clothes, and then settled with a grasp upon his throat which produced the death rattle of choking suffocation. A strong silk handkerchief served the handcuff's place, and to bind hands and feet together; after which she lay quietly upon a little straw and rags, in one corner, the only articles of furniture in the room, except a bottle, broken cup,

and something that looked as though it had once been female apparel.

"Is this your wife?"

"She was."

"What is she now?"

"The devil's fury. You saw what she is."

"Do you live with her?"

"I did for seven years."

"Did she drink then?"

"Sometimes—not so bad."

"Did you drink?"

"Well, none to hurt. I kept a coffee house."

"And made your wife a drunkard. How came she reduced to this dreadful condition? You are well dressed."

"I left her three months ago and went West to find a place to move to. She said if she could go where nobody knew her she would reform. I left her in a comfortable room, with good furniture and good clothes. Now where are they? All gone to the pawn-broker's; the money gone for rum—her virtue, shame, everything gone. How, what, and where do I find her? As you see, crazy, drunk, in this miserable hole, in Cow Bay. And my boy, starved, made drunk, and—"

"What, have you a child by her, then?"

"Yes, a sweet little boy, six years old. Oh, I wish he was awake, that you might see him."

And he stepped to the miserable bed and lifted the dirty rag of a quilt, looked a moment upon the pale boy, dropped upon his knees, raised him in his arms, looked again wildly, and fell back fainting as he exclaimed, "Great God, is he dead." What we could do, we did, and then followed strange footsteps up the rickety stairs. They were those of Tom and the Missionary, for here lived little Madalina.

The second floor was divided into three rooms. We looked in as we passed. The back room was 10 by 12 feet square, inhabited by two black men and their wives, and a white woman lodger, who "sometimes has company." Here they eat, drink and sleep,—cook, wash and iron. The latter operation is performed on the bottom of the wash-tub, for there is no table. The front room, 8 by 14 feet, contained five blacks, men and women. Each of these rooms rented for \$4 a month, *in advance*.

A dark center room, occupied by a white woman, was only 6 by 7 feet, for which she paid 50 cents a week. On the third floor, the dark center room, same size, was occupied by a real good looking, young, healthy German woman, with her husband, a great burly negro, as black as Africa's own son, and a fine looking little white boy, four years old, as a lodger. We found the door shut, and no ventilator bigger than the key-hole. There was a smell about the air.

In the back room, 10 by 12, we found the wood-splitters—the woman and her two boys, a negro and his wife, a woman lodger, and occasional company. The rent of this room is one dollar a week in advance. The total amount of furniture was not good security for one week's rent.