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Temperance is the moderate use of things beneficial, and abstinence from things hurtful.

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THE DOINGS OF A SPIRIT SHOP; OR, THE STORY OF JAMES AND MARY DUFFIL.

A TALE OF REAL LIFE.

From the Journal of the American Temperance Union.

"The morn was bright, but the storm came,
At high noon they were all wreck'd."

"O, that way madness lies, let me shun that."

King Lear.

At the close of one fine summer's day, James and Mary Duffil seated themselves at the door of a neat little farm house to enjoy the cool of the evening. All was still; no sound was heard within but the low breathings from the sleep of two little boys, among whose silken curls the gentle breeze was playing, while the hum of insects and the murmuring of the brook over the pebbles, marked them as the only living things abroad. Mary Duffil had been more silent than usual; when, with some hesitancy at so strange a question, she asked James, "What does that spirit cost that you get at the shop every day as you come home from the field?" "Twelve and a half cents," answered James, with entire unconcern. "Did you ever think," asked Mary, "what that would come to a week?" "Why no," answered James, "but I can easily tell, six times"—"Seven," said Mary. "Ay, true," replied James, "seven; you are always for coming right up to the mark. I don't go to the shop on Sunday, you know; but then I bring it home on Saturday, because at noon I always think of it; it is eighty-seven cents. I did not think it would come to so much; it's nearly a dollar; why it takes almost a day's profit out of the week." "Well, James," said Mary, "how much would that be a month?" "Three dollars and a half," answered James, "I could hire a man a whole week every month for that, and then I could raise a good deal more corn." "If it is so much a month," said Mary, "what will it come to in a year?" James was quick at reckoning—"Forty-two dollars," said he, "how things will run up when they are put together, I never thought of only twelve and a half cents, and that I can pay any time, in corn or potatoes, or any thing I have. I wonder how much our tea and sugar cost; did you ever reckon?" "O, yes," said Mary, "six pounds of tea, three dollars; fifty weight of sugar, five dollars." "Why," answered James, "does that little spirit I get every day, cost more than our tea and sugar?" "Five times as much," said Mary, "and I was thinking, dear husband, if you could not give it up as well as not, and not go to the shop any more?" "O, yes," said James, "I could at any time; I don't care any thing about it; I go there because other folks do, and it's pleasant to hear the news, and it would be mean, you know, to take up the room, and not pay for it; and it makes me a little stronger, I suppose, though I'm as strong as a lion now; I'm never tired. To-day, Mary, we had a mowing match, there were six of the stoutest fellows in town, and I cut two swarths to their one."

The next morning James Duffil said to his wife, "I wonder, Mary, what set you thinking about how much things cost? I guess,—I guess you want a new gown; I almost said I would not try to pay for that wood this year, for I thought that you might want something, and it would take all I can earn;" and seeing the sun mounting up from behind the hill, he took his scythe, and whistling, went to his day's work. At night, looking a little arch, he said: "I saved my twelve and a half cents to day, Mary." A fortnight after, he went to a neighbouring market, and the next morning she discovered, lying in her drawer, a new gown; a tear shot into her eye, at the generous spirit of her husband, and yet a slight pain was felt at the occasion. "He shall not think me selfish," thought she, and long before night, she watched for his return. As soon as he came in sight, his little children ran out to

meet him, and his wife stood waiting at the door; a nice supper was prepared for him. He did not seem in any haste, he had an air of easy indifference, a touch of modesty, as he slyly glanced at his wife, and hanging up his scythe, he stooped, and kissing each of his joyous boys, sat down with one on each knee. "I have paid the last dollar," said he, "for my farm, to day, Mary, and now I don't owe a cent in the world; it is as handsome a farm as there is in the country, for its size." "But when you were paying so much, how could you buy me a new gown?" said Mary, "I was not so selfish as to want to have you give up any thing for me, it was not a gown I wanted; but I allow it is a very pretty one, and I shall always wear it with pleasure." "O I did not think so," a soft expression stealing over his hardy features, "You ought to have it and a great many other things, if I could get them; besides, it did not cost any thing, I saved all those twelve and a half cents; they tried to get me into the shop every day, but I went straight by; they told me my glass was all measured out, and they had rather give it to me than lose my company; but I would not look, and said by-and-by, for I thought of you all the time, and now I don't care if I never go there again; besides, I sold the cow for more than I expected, so that we are just as rich as if I had not bought it; and if we get along as well as we have done, we shall have all we want; our farm will bring us every thing, besides, a great deal to sell, and we will have a new house, and these boys must go to school; many a man that has gone to Congress was born in a house not bigger than this, learning makes the man," putting his hand upon the head of each of his chubby rosy-checked boys; "with right conduct," added their happy mother. "Yes boys," said their father, "you must always behave well, if you want your mother should love you." The last warm red rays of a summer's sun never shot upon a happier family.

James and Mary Duffil had been married about four years, and there was not a more promising or happy couple in all the land. He had been trained a good farmer, and she a nice housekeeper. True, they had but little to begin with; they rented a small farm; he had just enough to buy stock for it, and farming utensils, while she furnished three rooms with every necessary article, to which were added a few luxuries; but they had sound constitutions, with habits of industry and frugality, the best of all capital in our free and luxuriant country, where wealth flows in every channel. They were united in their affections, and strong in mutual confidence. James consulted his wife in all the transactions of his farm, while she was ingenious and diligent in applying every thing for the comfort and happiness of her much cherished family. The first streak of dawn roused them from their light slumbers, and the earliest star of evening lit them to deep repose, the sweet rest of a well spent day. No couple were more constant at church, nor made a better appearance; they were sociable and kind to their neighbours, participating in all the little enjoyments of life. And how could ruin find an entrance to so sequestered and happy a spot, where every want was supplied, and every desire was gratified; for their wants were few, and their desires simple, where pleasure, like the early flower of spring, bloomed from behind every hedge, sprung up and down in the valley, and shed its bright face on every hill side. But the seed had been sown from which they were to reap the whirlwind.

Mary Duffil was grieved that her husband had returned to the shop for his daily glass of spirit; but she remembered his many good qualities, which, in every thing else, led him to do right. "If he finds it injures him he will certainly leave it off himself," thought this confiding woman. In process of time another son and daughter were added to the family. Mary Duffil found her toils greatly increased, and her cares pressing heavily. The current of life had strangely lost its smoothness; nothing prospered as it used to; troubles thickened all around; and yet she perceived they