



## The Primary Catechism on Beer.

LESSON XIV.

### WASTEFULNESS OF BEER.

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

Q.—Why is beer-making wasteful?

A.—Because the grain is food when it is made into bread, and it is not food when made into beer.

Q.—What has the beer-drinker to show for it?

A.—Money gone, strength gone, time wasted, and a desire for more drink.

Q.—At the cost of one glass of beer a day, how long would it take a boy to buy a dollar book?

Q.—How could he get time to read it?

A.—He could save the time he would spend in beer-drinking and with beer-drinking companions.

Q.—What notable case can you give of a boy that did so?

A.—The statesman Benjamin Franklin, who was also the first great American philosopher.

Q.—Would one's choice between such things make any difference in his life?

A.—It would, for such practices always make a difference in everybody's life.

Q.—How much grain is wasted every year in the United States in beer-drinking?

A.—About sixty-five millions of bushels, and this amount is constantly increasing.

Q.—Upon whom does this loss fall?

A.—Upon all of us, for it makes other grain dearer.

## The Downward Step.

(By Mrs. Peter Stryker.)

... became acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Gricery about the year 1866. They were charming people. Two lovely little ones, a boy and girl, with rosy cheeks and sparkling eyes, filled their hearts. One could see at a glance that both father and mother regarded them with more than ordinary pride. They toiled for them, and many were the hours of rest denied for their sakes. Their aim was evidently to educate them and fit them for high and honorable lives and to give them a place in society in the years to come.

Gradually I became intimately associated with the family and spent many happy hours in their pleasant home. I discovered that their means were limited, but that in order to make ends meet the wife was helping in financial matters by taking in sewing. A young servant girl was in their employ, and to a casual visitor there was every appearance of a home where love and plenty reigned.

One cold day in winter I met Mr. G. on Broadway, New York City. His cheek was flushed, his eye was brighter than usual, and he greeted me with a hearty handshake. A sudden thought entered my mind, yet I chided myself at once.

'No, no! He is a member of the church; a man of good standing; a teacher in the Sabbath-school; a loving and devoted husband. It is a suggestion of the devil. The cold, brisk winter-air has flushed his cheek, and we all feel this exhilaration.'

My future visits in the home convinced me

that these thoughts were correct, so I sealed my lips even to my nearest friends.

Some time after this he was about to leave his home for his place of business, when his wife called to him:

'My dear, can you get your dinner at a restaurant to-day? I am very busy with my sewing.'

'Certainly,' was the reply, and he cheerfully left the house.

A few years passed away. The daughter married and left them. She had been the life of the home, and, although all their hopes concerning her seemed now about to be fulfilled, the parents grieved over the vacancy while they rejoiced for her future. But before the end of one short year the bride that had left her home in perfect health, slept the 'sleep that knows no waking,' with her infant at her side. The mother was sent for before the end came. The father, crazed with grief, came to us for comfort. What could we say to him? It was evident that he was drowning his sorrow in the wine-cup. Up and down the floor he paced, wild with sorrow, equally wild with drink. We dared not inform his wife of his condition. It would have killed her under the pressure of the present sorrow. So we again closed our lips and only spoke of it in the family circle.

Again and again I visited the home, and repeatedly I noticed that he was under the influence of liquor, yet there was not enough proof to condemn, and sometimes I half believed that I was over-suspicious, having once seen him in so sad a condition. His wife appeared to be totally unconscious of it, and I felt quite sure that had she suspected anything wrong she would have confided in me.

One day we called together on a family of wealth. The husband came into the parlor to welcome us. He was stupidly intoxicated.

After we had left the house my friend exclaimed:

'Poor woman! How she must have suffered! How mortified I should have been if it had been my husband!'

I was then pretty well convinced that all past suspicions had been imaginary and that grief had driven her loved one once, and only once, to intemperance. No one among all our friends ever hinted a suspicion. Why should I carry these doubts any longer? Why hint of these thoughts to his wife when I had had no proofs save one?

I removed from the city for a short time, and on my return went at once to the home of my friend. There was a cloud on her brow.

'I have something very sad to tell you,' she said. And then, fixing her eye steadily upon me she gasped:

'My husband drinks!'

'Well,' I replied, 'I feared so, but thought you would have been the one to discover it, and therefore never spoke to you on the subject. Have you never suspected this until now?'

'Yes,' she replied, 'but he always laughed at me and said he had been smoking, and then I believed him.'

She confided to me the story of her early life. When he waited upon her her brother warned her that he drank. She became angry with him, charged him with wrong motives, and became engaged. Friends interposed; she shut her ears, and would not be advised. He had never fallen into these habits after marriage, she thought, and until now, her love had been blind, while he had gone on deceiving her.

Drink became his master and he grew reckless. He still held his position in the church. When a few of the members noticed

ed that he was running downhill he indignantly denied all charges.

Once his wife came to me in tears.

'Oh!' she said, 'next Sabbath will be our communion day. My husband has been doing well of late. There has been no evidence that he has been drinking, but when he tastes the fermented wine he will lose his control. Can you help me? Do not let the officers of the church know that you are speaking of my husband.'

I went at once to one of the deacons, and from that day up to the present time, although many years have passed, no fermented wine has been used at their communion service.

But habits of former years were too strong for him, and while his son, the only remaining child, was on his deathbed, the father was found lying on a sofa in his office gasping in death. No one knew the cause. On his table lay a paper giving directions to his wife, and this, in connection with some remarks which he had made, led many of his friends to believe that he had died by his own hand. The unhappy wife lingered to lay her only child in the grave, and then, broken down by care and sorrow, she was laid to rest with her family.

There are three warnings in this story, which is a true one. It is to young people, to wives, to officers of the church.

To young people anticipating marriage, it says:

'If, at any time, upon any occasion, under any circumstances, you have reason to believe that your intended indulges in drink, though it be like cutting off your right arm, refuse to marry him.'

We know of a young girl who took this stand. To-day she is the wife of a prosperous lawyer, with a happy family around her; while the rejected one lies in a drunkard's grave.

To the wives of men who are inclined to social life—ah! not only to such, but to all young wives, it would say:

'Be careful about sending your husbands to dine in restaurants. Better feed them on bread and water in your own house than urge them on to temptation.'

To the officers and rulers of churches:

'Banish the fermented wine from your communion tables.'

Ah, but some will say:

'How can it be the Lord's supper if the fermented wine is not used?'

Who told you, my friend, that it must be fermented wine? Did the Lord Jesus! Matthew says 'the cup' and 'the fruit of the vine.' Mark says 'the cup' and 'the fruit of the vine.' Luke says 'the cup' and 'the fruit of the vine.' John says nothing about it. Paul speaks of 'the cup.' Why, then, do so many insist that the wine must be fermented? Even the new version appears to find no authority for this. Certainly our Lord will not be displeased if we remember his death in a manner that will not offend a weaker brother. Will he frown when we stand before him at the great Day of Reckoning because, like St. Paul, we determined to do nothing while the world stood that would offend a weaker brother? Perhaps he may bless. Perhaps he may say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

I am willing to run my risk with a church that uses unfermented wine. Are you?

'Come thou with us and we will do thee good.'

—Mutual Temperance Advocate.

'Do as you please and you serve Mammon.'