

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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The Social Glass.

BY J. H. PRICE.

Walter Howard was a handsome young man of some twenty-three summers when I first became acquainted with him. He was one of those frank, open-hearted persons that may be found scattered here and there over this earth as though it were to portray more strikingly the narrow-heartedness of the majority of the inhabitants of this lower world. As I said, he was about twenty-three when we first met, which was at the bar-room of the pleasant little inn in a small town in the interior of New-York. I soon became interested in him, and long before night we were as thick as if we had been brought up in the same house.

Soon after becoming acquainted with him, he invited me to spend an evening at his house, which I did willingly, as I was anxious to get an introduction to his bride, (for he had been married but a few weeks.) I accordingly arranged my scanty wardrobe to the best advantage, and hastened to the residence of my young friend. Everything passed off most agreeably, and I should have spent a pleasant evening, but for the sight of a decanter, which he set before me and requested me to drink. This I, however, declined. He and his wife, however, partook rather freely, and soon its effects became visible in both, and on him in particular.— This grieved me very much, and on the morrow, when he was sober, I expostulated with him on the folly of such conduct, and the awful tendencies it would have on his family, were he so fortunate as to become the father of one. To this he answered with a proud sneer:

"Do you think, sir, there can be any danger in taking a social glass?"

"Sir," said I, "although there may not be any great harm in taking a social glass, yet it may and does almost invariably lead one into a more constant practice of drinking, which in the course of a few years, will ruin the intellect and make us unfit for any labor whatever; and, therefore, my dear young friend, let me advise you to desist from your habits ere it is too late."

"But, sir," he answered, "the social glass was always passed around the family board at my father's house, and although I am very much obliged to you for your kind advice, I shall still allow myself the privilege of taking a social glass whenever I choose."

Seeing that further remonstrance was in vain, I left him to go on in his course.

As I predicted, the practice grew on him, and that too with fearful strides; and at length he was compelled to leave the home of his childhood, and with his wife, to seek a new one in another State.

A few years glided swiftly on and brought many changes, and among the rest, I had changed my place of abode, and was seeking a new home, when I stopped for the night at a small town in the western part of Pennsylvania. After tea was over, I wandered forth by the light of the moon.

It was a glorious night, and the stars themselves seemed as if they were trying to outstrip in splendor, the "Queen of the Night." Everything around was calm and serene, and before I was aware of it, I found myself on the outskirts of the village, and before a fast-decaying log-house. I stopped and was meditating on my past life, when a gentle tap on the shoulder, awakened me to my senses, and turning I beheld a poorly dressed woman at my side, who thus accosted me:

"Oh, sir, will you not come into this house with me, and see my poor husband; he is dying, and I am all alone, and know not what to do."

I assented, and quickly followed her into the hut, where I found lying on the floor in the corner, a man in the prime of life, who was dying. At the first glance I saw what was the matter with him. He was suffering with the mania. I went to him, and saw to my sorrow that it was no other than Walter Howard. Yes, there he lay, the once frank, open-hearted Walter Howard, a drunkard, and dying at that. I spoke to him, but he immediately began with horrid imprecations:

"Back, demons of hell, back, back—oh! do not take me yet—stay, hold!" And then, pointing to the rafters, he said, "do you not see them now; they are all over the house; drive them out; they have come for me; drive them out;" and with this he sprang from his miserable bed, and sank back exhausted; and soon after expired in great agony.

I staid with his wretched wife until late at night, and left for my apartments at the hotel. The next day I made inquiries, and from a gentleman learned the following account:

"When he came here he got a situation in a store as head clerk, and for a while done well; all was happiness, and he and his wife were respected and honored by all that knew them; but he began to drink, at first but seldom, but at length he became so addicted to drunkenness that his employer discharged him. The eloquent pleadings of his wife, with his promise of better behavior, regained him his situation, and once more he was respected and happy; but at length he 'fell to rise no more,' as he could no longer get employment.

"From this time he plunged into drunkenness the deeper, and was compelled at length to work by the day for his support, but still he has continued to drink, and has died from the effects of his dissipation."

On the morrow I helped to bury him, and left the place and journeyed on in my wanderings over the earth. A few months since I happened at the place where I saw him die, and on inquiry found that his once beautiful wife was an inmate of the county almshouse.

Yes, 'tis so. Walter Howard is now in a drunkard's grave, and his wife in an almshouse. Had he taken my advice he might now have been an honorable citizen, and instead of filling a drunkard's grave might have stood in the halls of our legislatures, and enraptured the minds and hearts of the then assembled multitudes by his eloquence; and his