

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. 14.

Eleven o'clock Lunch.

(From the Journal of the American Temperance Union.)

CHAPTER I.

"Eleven o'clock, Ned; don't you hear the state house clock striking?"

Thus spoke a young man, a junior partner of the house of Carton & Co., one of the wholesale houses that line Market street. The person addressed as Ned was the head salesman of the establishment.

"Wait a moment, Thomas, I will be with you directly. I think the morning has passed very rapidly."

"Rapidly!" replied Thomas, "I have been thinking that eleven o'clock would never come. It appears to me the hours grow longer day by day."

Ned having got through with what he had been busy with, took the arm of Thomas, and together they proceeded to a neighboring tavern, kept by one Harry Blight. Harry was said to provide the best lunch of any landlord in the vicinity of Market street. In fact, as Thomas remarked, it was more like a regular dinner than lunch. Stepping in at the door, they soon surrounded the well filled board.

Thomas, ravenous with hunger, soon had the carving knife in his hand, cutting off a slice for Ned. He helped himself; laying it upon a piece of bread, he mustarded and peppered it to his satisfaction; and then was heard the accompaniment of mastication, to the music of the brandy bottles, as they rattled upon the counter.

"Now, Neddy, my boy, what will you have?"

"I'll take a gin sling to-day, Thomas."

The sling and toddy were soon deposited beneath their waistcoats, and calling for segars, they lighted them and took a seat, to regale themselves with their flavor.

"I say, Ned, this saloon of Harry's is a snug place to while away half an hour in, before dinner. A more gentlemanly or clever fellow I never knew. He keeps the best liquors, segars, and lunch, of any landlord in town; and I am glad he is so well patronized."

"Well, Thomas, what will you have?—my treat, you know."

"I'll take brandy and sugar, Ned."

"Here, waiter, bring us a gin sling and a brandy and sugar."

Thomas having prepared his brandy and sugar to his liking, sat sipping it and smacking his lips—a stranger to the glass would have smacked his lips too, if he had tasted it, not for its flavor, but for its fiery taste, no water having been mixed with them; Thomas having lately always asserted that water spoiled brandy and sugar. Having finished their glasses, they returned to the store to attend to their regular business.

Thomas Marloe was a young man, whose energy had enabled him to reach the post of junior partner in the house of Carton & Co. He had a young wife and one child, a

sweet little girl three years old. They lived in the upper part of the city, in a snug two-story house, and the comfort within was due to Mary, his wife. She was a lovely woman; one whose exemplary life and sweet disposition endeared her to all her acquaintances. Thomas fully appreciated her, and nought was left undone by him to contribute to her happiness.

Thomas, introduced by his companions to Harry Blight's eleven o'clock free lunch, soon became a regular attendant at it. He never dreamed of danger, but under the guise of seeking the lunch, he would seek the gratification of an appetite, that bade fair to prove his ruin. Eleven o'clock soon became too long to wait, and nine o'clock would find him at the bar, with a cracker in one hand and a glass of brandy in the other. He made many excuses to himself, and often tried to silence the accusing conscience within,—it spoke in thunder tones to his mind. Often the face of his sweet uncomplaining wife, would rise up before his mind, as he stepped upon the threshold of Harry's saloon. And often, his frenzied eye would fire with tears, as he felt the power of the tempter, like an anaconda, drawing its coils around him.

But what of Ned? Ah! Ned saw the fatal dart fixed in the shaft, ready to be sped into his heart, and like a prudent man, he forsook the eleven o'clock lunch, and tried all his powers of persuasion to induce Thomas to follow his example. It was, however, of no avail. Thomas had become spell-bound—the charmer knew his power, and well he used it. He visited regularly his old haunts, but, as he became seedy, or what is called a shabby genteel loafer, his former companions forsook him and declined his acquaintance.

CHAPTER II.

Five years have passed away upon the wings of time. Thomas has waded through these years, days and hours of sorrow; and his skirts have been defiled with the gutter and the kennel. He who had been so careful of his person and dress, has become a dirty slob. Mary had often supped on blighted hopes, and departed joys—her uncomplaining was the wonder of her friends and neighbors. Oh! they knew not the depth of affection in that young heart! When expostulated with by her friends for living with her husband; when told that nought had been left undone; that persuasion, kind admonition, friendly advice and entreaties had all failed; and there was no use in attempting his reformation, she would, with clasped hands and litted eyes, bend to her knees, and taking her little daughter Clara's tiny fingers between her own, raise her voice in supplication to her God.

Long and patiently would she sit over work to secure for her husband and little one a morsel to keep them from starving. Her labors at night affected her eyes—and her constant application to her needle, and want of exercise had faded the rose from her cheeks, which had given place to the lily. At this present time she was laboring under a cold,